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Echo Hawk Issues Reaffirmation of the Tejon Indian Tribe's Government-to-Government Status

WASHINGTON, D.C.— In a letter to the Tejon Indian Tribe of California, Assistant Secretary – Indian Affairs Larry Echo Hawk reaffirmed the federal relationship between the United States and the Tejon Indian Tribe. The Assistant Secretary's letter confirms that the Tribe has a relationship with the federal government.

The Tejon Indian Tribe first requested confirmation of its status in 2006. Due to an administrative error, the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) failed for several years to place the Tejon Indian Tribe on the list of federally recognized tribes that the BIA is required to publish annually. That list, entitled "Indian Entities Recognized and Eligible to Receive Services from the United States Bureau of Indian Affairs," was last published in the Federal Register on October 1, 2010 at 75 FR 60810, and the list was supplemented on October 27, 2010 at 75 FR 66124.

In his letter to the Tejon Indian Tribe, the Assistant Secretary stated that "[u]pon review of the facts and history of this matter, including prior Assistant Secretaries' decisions, I hereby reaffirm the federal relationship between the United States and the Tejon Indian Tribe, thus concluding the long and unfortunate omission of the Tejon Indian Tribe from the list of federally recognized tribes."

The Assistant Secretary-Indian Affairs discharges the duties of the Secretary of the Interior with the authority and direct responsibility to strengthen the government-to-government relationship with the nation's 566 federally recognized tribes, advocate policies that support Indian self-determination, protect and preserve Indian trust assets, and administer a wide array of laws, regulations and functions relating to American Indian and Alaska Native tribes, tribal members and individual trust beneficiaries. The Assistant Secretary oversees the Bureau of Indian Affairs and the Bureau of Indian Education. For more information, visit www.indianaffairs.gov.

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