



JUL 03 2019

Dear Tribal Leader and Urban Indian Organization Leader:

I am writing to update you on new appointments and updates to the Indian Health Service (IHS) senior leadership team.

### **Deputy Director for Field Operations**

I am pleased to share that I have appointed Mr. Christopher Mandregan, Jr., a Tribal member of the Aleut Community of St. Paul, Alaska, to serve as the new IHS Deputy Director for Field Operations. In this capacity, Mr. Mandregan will oversee the 12 IHS Areas, which include IHS and tribally managed Service Units, Urban Indian Organization health programs, and the IHS Office of Environmental Health and Engineering. He will also provide management oversight and expertise in formulating policies, goals, and strategies related to program operations and resource allocation.

Mr. Mandregan began his career with the IHS in 1986. In 1996, he was appointed as the Executive Officer for the IHS Alaska Area, responsible for administrative support services for the Area. In 1998, he accepted the position of Alaska Area Director, where he was responsible for the Federal portion of the health care system for Alaska Natives and for conducting Government-to-Government relationships with Tribes on behalf of the HHS Secretary.

Mr. Mandregan returned to IHS Headquarters in February 2019 to serve as Acting Deputy Director for Management Operations and succeeds Rear Admiral Kevin Meeks, a member of the Chickasaw Nation, now retired, after 32 years of service with the IHS.

### **(Acting) Deputy Director for Management Operations**

Effective with Mr. Mandregan's appointment, Rear Admiral Chris Buchanan, current IHS Deputy Director, will also serve as Acting Deputy Director for Management Operations at IHS Headquarters until a permanent replacement is selected.

### **Chief Information Officer and Director, Office of Information Technology**

I am also pleased to announce the appointment of Mr. Mitchell Thornbrugh, an enrolled member of the Muscogee Creek Nation, as the permanent Chief Information Officer and the Director of the IHS Office of Information Technology. As Director, Mr. Thornbrugh is responsible for advising IHS senior leadership on all aspects of information resource management and technology and ensuring IHS compliance with information technology laws, regulations, and policies.

Mr. Thornbrugh previously served as the Chief Operations Officer for the Cherokee Nation Hastings Hospital. While there, Mr. Thornbrugh streamlined administrative services, improved inventory management, led the implementation of a commercial electronic health record, and

managed the transition and organizational change to a centralized revenue cycle team. Mr. Thornbrugh also served as the Chief Information Officer for Cherokee Nation Hastings Hospital from 2005 to 2009, and has been a long-time member of the IHS Information Systems Advisory Committee (ISAC).

Please join me in welcoming these individuals to these leadership roles. As we strengthen IHS management and operations, I am confident that we will continue to make progress in achieving our mission to raise the physical, mental, social, and spiritual health of American Indians and Alaska Natives to the highest level.

Sincerely,

/ Michael D. Weahkee /

RADM Michael Weahkee, MBA, MHSA  
Assistant Surgeon General, U.S. Public Health  
Service Principal Deputy Director