



JUN 02 2016

Indian Health Service
Rockville MD 20852

Dear Great Plains Area Tribal Leader and Urban Indian Organization Leader:

As will be announced in the June 3, 2016-dated *Federal Register* Notice, the Indian Health Service (IHS) opens a 90-day comment period to request written comments by Tribes, Tribal Organizations, and Urban Indian Organizations located in the Great Plains Area on the structure of the IHS Great Plains Area. The Notice also announces details for a series of Agency-convened in-person and telephone Tribal Consultations and Urban Confer sessions.

The IHS is requesting comments and recommendations on the organization and structure of the IHS Great Plains Area Office as part of ongoing efforts to become more patient-focused and better meet the needs of the American Indians within the Great Plains Area. Specific topics may include, but are not limited to, the geographic location of the IHS Great Plains Area Office, centralization or further decentralization of Area Office services, staffing, budget, local involvement, transparency and oversight, partnerships, accountability, monitoring, and how the Area Office can support the service units.

In-person and telephone Tribal Consultation and Urban Confer sessions have been scheduled as follows:

Onsite Tribal Consultations and Urban Confer Sessions

- July 13, 2016, in Aberdeen, South Dakota
- August 30, 2016, in Rapid City, South Dakota

Telephone Tribal Consultation and Urban Confer Sessions

- June 22, 2016
- August 10, 2016

The Tribal Consultation and Urban Confer sessions are open to elected or appointed leaders of Tribal Governments and their designated representatives, and recognized representatives from Urban Indian Organizations. Representatives from other Tribal organizations and Native non-profit organizations are welcome to attend as observers.

Those wishing to participate in the discussions must have a copy of a letter signed by an elected or appointed official or their designee, which authorizes them to serve as a representative of the Tribe. This documentation should be submitted no later than (3) days in advance of the Tribal Consultation and Urban Confer Session. Written comments by Tribes and Tribal Organizations can be e-mailed to consultation@ihs.gov. Written comments by Urban Indian Organizations can be e-mailed to urbanconfer@ihs.gov. Please direct comments by facsimile to CAPT Chris Buchanan at (605) 226-7541.

A detailed report of all comments received during the Tribal Consultation and Urban Confer sessions will be prepared and made available on the IHS Web site following the close of the comment period. Please provide your written comments as instructed below.

Thank you for your support and partnership. I look forward to hearing your input on the state of the IHS Great Plains Area Office.

Sincerely,

/Mary Smith/

Mary Smith

Principal Deputy Director

Tribal Leaders, please send input by e-mail to:	consultation@ihs.gov Subject line: State of the Great Plains Area Office
Urban Indian Organizations, please send input by e-mail to:	urbanconfer@ihs.gov Subject line: State of the Great Plains Area Office
Send input by postal mail to:	Michelle EagleHawk Office of Direct Service and Contracting Tribes Indian Health Service 5600 Fishers Lane Mail Stop: 08E20 Rockville, MD 20857 ATTN: State of the Great Plains Area Office