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News Release

Office of the Special Trustee for American Indians

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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President Proposes \$119 Million FY 2018 Budget for Office of the Special Trustee for American Indians

WASHINGTON, D.C. – President Donald Trump today proposed a \$119 million Fiscal Year 2018 (FY18) budget for the Department of the Interior’s Office of the Special Trustee for American Indians (OST), saving taxpayers 14 percent compared to last year’s spending levels. OST’s FY 2018 budget supports the President’s efforts to create a more efficient, effective, and accountable federal government.

“President Trump promised the American people he would cut wasteful spending and make the government work for the taxpayer again, and that’s exactly what this budget does,” said U.S. Secretary of the Interior Ryan Zinke. “Working carefully with the President, we identified areas where we could reduce spending and also areas for investment, such as addressing the maintenance backlog in our National Parks and increasing domestic energy production on federal lands. The budget also allows the Department to return to the traditional principles of multiple-use management to include both responsible natural resource development and conservation of special places. Being from the West, I’ve seen how years of bloated bureaucracy and D.C.-centric policies hurt our rural communities. The President’s budget saves taxpayers by focusing program spending, shrinking bureaucracy, and empowering the front lines.” T

The President’s budget supports OST’s core functions. The Office will focus on those lines of business that are mission essential in support of statutory and regulatory requirements, as well as the Secretary’s Trust Principles. OST will invest in technology and process improvement that produce cost savings over time and is participating in an aggressive department-wide effort to reduce administrative costs.

“Serving taxpayer and Tribal communities is at the core of our mission. This budget enables us to meet our core mission and improve the efficient management of our operations,” said Acting Special Trustee, Debra DuMontier.

Efficiencies will also be found through partnering with Tribes, landowners and federal partners to streamline the probate process.

“OST is the premiere public service organization dedicated to the Indian fiduciary trust,” DuMontier said. “By identifying new and more efficient ways to operate, OST will continue its tradition of commitment to excellent service to our beneficiaries and Indian Country.”

OST was initially tasked with department-wide oversight for the reform of Indian trust management and implementation of new fiduciary accounting systems. OST’s oversight role expanded in 1996 to include operational responsibility for financial trust fund management, including receipt, investment and disbursement of beneficiary funds. In the 20 years since its establishment, OST has worked diligently to restore confidence in trust management. Receipt of an unqualified opinion, informally referred to as a clean audit, of OST’s Individual Indian Money (IIM) financial records for the fourth consecutive year in 2016 demonstrates progress achieved.

Visit the DOI website at <https://www.doi.gov/budget/appropriations/2018/highlights> to view the fiscal year 2018 President’s budget proposal.

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