



THE TRIBAL ENGAGEMENT PROGRAM AT BSEE

The Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement's Tribal Working Group is expanding the Tribal coordination and consultation policy and procedures to enhance the bureau's Tribal engagement initiatives and meet our trust responsibilities by developing a National Tribal Engagement Program (NTEP).

Although the areas of the Outer Continental Shelf where BSEE has regulatory authority are off the coast and submerged, BSEE's OCS activities can nevertheless affect people and ecosystems landward of the OCS, including many members of Indigenous Tribes who live near and use areas where BSEE activities are proposed and conducted.

It is important to note that the ancestors of today's Tribes owned, occupied and exercised stewardship over vast areas of land before sea level rise at the end of the last ice age, and that bureau activities on the OCS could also impact Tribal access to ancestral lands.

Those lands and waters contain cultural and natural resources of significance and value to Indian Tribes and their citizens, including sacred religious sites, burial sites, wildlife, and sources of Indigenous foods and medicines. In addition, many of those lands and waters lie within areas where Indian Tribes have reserved the right to hunt, fish, and observe cultural traditions pursuant to ratified treaties and agreements with the United States.

To ensure we honor Tribal sovereignty and include Tribal voices in policy deliberation that affects Tribal Communities, we will engage and consult with Tribes prior to federal actions.

Gaining knowledge of how Bureau activities may affect traditional ways, use of subsistence resources, and Indigenous cultural resources is critical to BSEE's decision-making.



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We must ensure that Tribes have a seat at the table for every decision that impacts them and their communities. From clean energy projects and economic development to addressing past injustices against Tribal communities, the Biden-Harris administration is committed to fulfilling federal trust and treaty responsibilities to Tribal Nations and working for Indian Country.”

*— Interior Secretary
Deb Haaland*

STRENGTHENING TRIBAL ENGAGEMENT

Some of BSEE's recent efforts to strengthen Tribal engagement include:

- Reviewing our existing Tribal engagement practices.
- Drafting a new bureau policy for Tribal Engagement.
- Creating a Tribal consultation programmatic library of documents from other government agencies to determine best practices.
- Working with the Indian Energy Service Center to inform our work on the Tribal Consultation Handbook.
- Engaged in consultations for the Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement that will inform future decisions on oil and gas decommissioning activities in the California OCS.

The Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement, established in 2011, is a U.S. Department of the Interior agency. BSEE promotes worker safety, environmental protection and conservation of resources through regulatory oversight and enforcement of the offshore energy industry on the U.S. Outer Continental Shelf.