

<Letter Head Address>

<Insert Tribal Crest/Seal>

Must receive Tribal approval to use crest/seal. If not approved use Buy-Back logo.

<Letter Head Address>

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Subject/Re: Land Buy-Back Program Coming to [RESERVATION NAME]

Dear Landowner,

The Land Buy-Back Program for Tribal Nations (Buy-Back Program, Program) is coming soon to the <Reservation Name>. You have been identified as a landowner at the <Reservation Name>. The Buy-Back Program implements the land consolidation component of the *Cobell* Settlement, which provided for the purchase of fractional interests in trust or restricted land from willing sellers at fair market value. Land purchased through this Program at the <Reservation Name> will automatically be placed in trust for the benefit of the <Tribe Name>.

The Buy-Back Program provides individual landowners an opportunity to address the problem of fractionation by consolidating interests and restoring them to tribal trust ownership for uses benefiting the reservation community and tribal members. Fractionation results from the policy of breaking up tribal homelands into individual allotments or tracts and then the division of ownership among more and more owners after the death of the original owner or allottee. Although the allotted land is not divided physically, the children, spouses, and other relatives of the original and successive landowners inherit increasingly smaller undivided common ownership interests in the land. As a result, fractionation of the land has grown exponentially over generations. Many allotted tracts now have hundreds of individual owners. Fractionated ownership of allotted lands and the checkerboard nature of land ownership patterns cause major challenges to tribes that impact their ability to exercise tribal sovereignty and self-determination:

* The checkerboard ownership pattern creates jurisdictional challenges and ties up land within the reservation boundaries, making it difficult to pursue economic development and infrastructure;
* Fractionated ownership can make it hard to protect or obtain access to sacred and/or cultural sites; and
* Income received from the land, such as lease income, can be so divided that individual owners may receive just a few cents based on their fractional share.

The <Tribe Name> has <once again> been selected to participate in the Buy-Back Program. You may be receiving an offer package in <Season Year>. If you are interested in selling your interest(s), please contact the Trust Beneficiary Call Center at 1-888-678-6836 to update your contact information and register as a willing seller. Identifying yourself as a willing seller does not commit you to selling your land, nor does it guarantee that you will receive an offer. It does, however, identify your desire to receive an offer and provides us an opportunity to share information with you at the earliest possible time.

Additional information about the Program is also available to landowners on the Buy-Back Program website: [www.doi.gov/buybackprogram](http://www.doi.gov/buybackprogram). <We are also planning to host an event to further discuss the Program and its opportunities. We hope to see you there and answer any questions that you may have.>

Sincerely,

<Tribal Executive Signature>

**Save The Date:**

**What:** <Event Name>

**Who:** <Presenter>

**When:** <Date of Event>

**Where:** <Location of Event>