

Important information about the \$3.4 billion Indian Trust Settlement

For current or former IIM account holders, Owners of land held in trust or restricted status, or their heirs

There is a proposed Settlement in *Cobell v. Salazar*, a class action lawsuit about individual Indian land held in trust by the federal government. This notice is just a summary. For details, call the toll-free number or visit the website listed below.

The lawsuit claims that the federal government violated its duties by (a) mismanaging trust funds/assets, (b) improperly accounting for those funds, and (c) mismanaging trust land/assets. The trust funds include money collected from farming and grazing leases, timber sales, mining, and oil and gas production from land owned by American Indians/Alaska Natives.

If you are included in the Settlement, your rights will be affected. To object to the Settlement, to comment on it, or to exclude yourself, you should get a detailed notice at www.IndianTrust.com or by calling 1-800-961-6109.

Can I get money?

There are two groups or “Classes” in the Settlement eligible for payment. Each Class includes individual IIM account holders or owners of land held in trust or restricted status who were alive on September 30, 2009.

Historical Accounting Class Members

- Had an open individual Indian Money account (“IIM”) anytime between October 25, 1994 and September 30, 2009, **and**
- The account had at least one cash transaction.
- Includes estates of account holders who died as of September 30, 2009, if the IIM account was still open on that date.

Trust Administration Class Members

- Had an IIM account recorded in currently available data in federal government systems any time from approximately 1985 to September 30, 2009, **or**
- Owned trust land or land in restricted status as of September 30, 2009.
- Includes estates of landowners who died as of September 30, 2009 where the trust interests were in probate as of that date. This means you have asked a court to transfer ownership of the deceased landowner’s property.

An individual may be included in one or both Classes.

What does the Settlement provide?

- A \$1.5 billion fund to pay those included in the Classes.
- A \$1.9 billion fund to buy small interests in trust or restricted land owned by many people.
- Up to \$60 million to fund scholarships to improve access to higher education for Indian youth.
- A government commitment to reform the Indian trust management and accounting system.

How much can I get?

- Historical Accounting Class Members will each get \$1,000.
- Trust Administration Class Members will get at least \$500.
- If you own a small parcel of land with many other people, the federal government may ask you to sell it. You will be offered fair market value. If you sell your land it will be returned to tribal control.

If you believe you are a member of either Class and are not receiving IIM account statements, you will need to call the toll-free number or visit the website to register.

What are my other rights?

- If you wish to keep your right to sue the federal government about the claims in this Settlement, you must exclude yourself by **April 20, 2011**.
- If you stay in the Settlement you can object to or comment on it by **April 20, 2011**. The detailed notice explains how to exclude yourself or object/comment.

The U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia will hold a hearing on June 20, 2011, to consider whether to approve the Settlement. It will also consider a request for attorneys’ fees, costs, and expenses in the amount of \$99.9 million. However, Class Counsel has fee agreements that would pay them 14.75% of the funds created for the Classes, which could result in an award of \$223 million. The Court may award more or less than these amounts based on controlling law. If approved, these payments and related costs will come out of the Settlement funds available for payment to Class Members.

If you wish, you or your own lawyer may ask to appear and speak at the hearing at your own cost. For more information, call or go to the website shown below or write to Indian Trust Settlement, P.O. Box 9577, Dublin, OH 43017-4877.