



Quinault Indian Nation

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TESTIMONY OF FAWN R. SHARP, PRESIDENT
QUINAULT INDIAN NATION
BEFORE THE
HOUSE SUBCOMMITTEE ON INTERIOR, ENVIRONMENT, AND RELATED AGENCIES
ON THE FY 2013 BUDGETS FOR THE BIA AND IHS PROGRAMS
March 28, 2012

"The Great Spirit bestowed life to all of us...including the animals, birds, fish, insects and plants. Our collective Native warnings and predictions were ignored in the rush to capitalize and exploit the bountiful resources of the land. Countless irreplaceable species are preserved now in museums or documents in textbooks. As the consequences of unmanaged exploitation and pollution reach irreversible proportions, the United States heeded our centuries old appeals for environmental protection. We only hope it's not too late and that Mother Nature's wounds can still be healed. We will continue to serve as the environmental conscience to the nation and the world."

*Joseph B. DeLaCruz, President
Quinault Indian Nation, 1972-1993*

In the spirit of these profound words of our former President, I am honored to appear before this Committee on behalf of the Quinault Indian Nation and provide testimony on our priority requests and recommendations on the FY 2013 Budgets for the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) and the Indian Health Service (IHS).

Tribal Specific Priority Requests

- \$8.714 million a Year for Blueback Restoration (for 2013-2020) - BIA
- \$4.64 million for Substance Abuse and Comprehensive Drug Strategy Plan – BIA and IHS
- \$2.21 million for the McBride Road Maintenance and Emergency Reservation Exit - BIA

Support Local/Regional Requests and Recommendations

- Affiliated Tribes of Northwest Indians
- Northwest Portland Area Indian Health Board
- Northwest Indian Fisheries Commission
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Support National and Self-Governance Budget Priorities

Bureau of Indian Affairs

1. Increase of \$8.8 million to fully fund Contract Support Costs (CSC)
2. Increase of \$13.7 million to fully fund Fixed Costs/Pay Costs
3. Increase of \$89 million for Tribal Priority Allocations
4. Fully fund all provisions of the Tribal Law & Order Act of 2010
5. Office of Self-Governance – Request not to consolidate in other division within Indian Affairs

Indian Health Service

1. Increase of \$99.4 million to fully fund Contract Support Costs (CSC)
2. Increase of \$200 million for Contract Health Services (CHS)
3. Increase of \$40 million for alcohol and substance abuse programs

4. Increase of \$304 million for Mandatory Costs to maintain current services
5. Office of Tribal Self-Governance (OTSG) - Increase \$5 million to the IHS OTSG
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JUSTIFICATION FOR TRIBAL SPECIFIC REQUESTS

\$8.714 MILLION ANNUALLY FOR BLUEBACK RESTORATION (annually from 2013-2020 = \$61M)

The Blueback Restoration Program is designed to halt the current habitat loss and deterioration and to repair and restore natural habitat forming processes and sockeye production on the Quinault floodplain. Conditions that will result from implementation of this program will benefit other salmon stocks in the system and will serve to protect private property and public infrastructure. The program plan calls for formation of public and private coalitions and partnerships to implement restoration actions.

The Quinault River Blueback (Sockeye Salmon) Restoration Program will help to restore the natural beauty and productivity of the Quinault River Basin to historic levels, thus making it a more attractive tourism destination. In addition, the program will provide local construction jobs during its implementation phase, and the restoration program will result in conditions that will improve and sustain commercial and sport fishing on the Quinault River. The program will also benefit local residents and businesses by reducing the likelihood of flooding and property loss and increasing local economies both in the near and long term future. Implementation of the restoration program will help avoid the burdensome and restrictive consequences of having the Quinault sockeye listed as threatened or endangered under provisions of the Endangered Species Act (ESA).

This unique and valuable stock of salmon is near collapse due mostly to degraded habitats in the upper Quinault River Basin and in Lake Quinault. This habitat loss has occurred over the past century due to historic timber harvesting, property development, and infrastructure construction. Natural processes on the floodplain began unraveling in the late 1800s and the deterioration is continuing in the present time.

This is a long term project expected to take up to 20 years to complete structure placement and enhancement, including the engineering and material procurement, with full implementation occurring in the decades following as natural processes rebuild the habitat to historic conditions. Through successful efforts of this program, it will protect and restore the livelihoods of 100 commercial fishermen and 25 sport fishing guides in Grays Harbor and Jefferson Counties and the Quinault Indian Reservation.

The program will also contribute partial support for approximately 20 jobs in the fish processing industry in western Washington, thus improve the economic status of the families living in the communities within the Quinault Indian Reservation. The program will provide employment for 10-30 laborers and equipment operators in Grays Harbor and Jefferson counties during the construction phases of individual projects. This project will reverse adverse environmental impacts by restoring habitats and ecosystems of the Quinault River and Lake Quinault while at the same time stabilizing the river channel in efforts to protect infrastructure and property loss.

The construction phase of this plan was implemented in the Fall of 2008 with the construction of 12 engineered log jams. With full funding as needed on an annual basis, the basic construction phase of this project is expected to be completed at the end of Fiscal Year 2020. Fertilization, data acquisition and monitoring will continue for many years.

\$4.64 MILLION FOR SUBSTANCE ABUSE AND COMPREHENSIVE DRUG STRATEGY PLAN

The Quinault Indian Nation Substance Abuse and Comprehensive Drug Strategy Plan seeks to improve, integrate, and strengthen the overall health and services to protect the communities on the reservation from the significant risks related to drug production, sale, and use by targeting enforcement, outreach, prevention, stabilization and harm reduction services to high risk-populations.

The Quinault Indian Nation is located along the southwest coast of Washington State. We are facing ever-escalating threats of drug trafficking, narcotic distribution, gang activity and weapons offenses — leading to devastating social, health and environmental consequences including damage to the pristine ecosystems. It is documented that for every one pound of methamphetamine that is produced, there are six pounds of hazardous waste materials created.

The regional topography renders us susceptible to drug smuggling and production. The Washington section of the U.S. – Canadian border is approximately 430 miles in length, a significant portion of which is vast, dense forest. The border has 13 official ports of entry (POE'S), but the rest of the border is largely unpatrolled. Drug smugglers exploit the national parks and forests, as well as other forestlands and waterways adjacent to the border, to smuggle drugs into Washington. Similarly, the clandestine manufacturing of methamphetamine in this region is of epidemic proportions.

To combat this problem, the Quinault Indian Nation Tribal legislative body (the Business Committee) formed and funded the Quinault Nation Narcotics Enforcement Team (QNNET) in September, 2011. Reporting directly to the Attorney General of the Quinault Indian Nation, QNNET works to prevent and suppress narcotic trafficking and drug use through intensive investigations. QNNET also collaborates and communicates with other local law enforcement agencies, the Department of Justice, elected officials and the community at large. During the first quarter of fiscal year 2012, we have made 48 arrests with 100% convictions and confiscated heroin, meth, prescription drugs, weapons and explosives. Cases have been prosecuted in Tribal, state and federal courts.

The General Accountability Office (GAO) is currently conducting a study that will focus on: 1) the scope of border and security issues facing Indian country; 2) what tribes are doing to combat the problems; 3) the challenges and successes in working with federal partners. The Quinault Indian Nation will make a perfect case study for the GAO undertaking and gain National visibility for the collective and multi-jurisdictional efforts of law enforcement and behavioral health agencies.

The Quinault Indian Nation's Substance Abuse component to the Comprehensive Drug Strategy Plan is part of a broader more comprehensive alcohol and drug strategy that recognizes the need to plan for the future. Quinault Indian Nation drug prevention and education programs are funded at 72% less than the national average per capita. To provide equivalent substance abuse prevention, treatment, and interdiction funding consistent with national levels, the Quinault Indian Nation must generate and budget **\$4,640,000 million** annually through federal and state grants combined with Tribal investment into these critical and vital programs. The estimated distribution of this annual budget need is:

- **Prevention: \$1.8 million annually**
- **Treatment: \$1.54 million annually**
- **Interdiction: \$1.3 million annually**

The Nation has encouraged collaborative relationships among government departments, health authorities, professionals, community members and families to create conditions that **prevent** drug use, **treat** drug users, **educate** the public and hold offenders **accountable** and **control access** to supply while helping ensure safer communities.

Most importantly, we have actively sought the guidance and wisdom of our elders and with the participation of our youth, community, churches and school districts we have undertaken a multidisciplinary approach and strategy, emphasizing prevention, enforcement, treatment and aftercare. Unfortunately, the best plans prove valuable only when the funding is available to execute and implement the strategy. We have found that at every level and in every discipline, funding to support our strategy is appallingly inadequate. We stress the urgent need to reclaim our communities to protect our families, our elders and our next seven generations from this menacing and deteriorating drug on the Quinault Indian Nation Reservation.

**\$2.21 MILLION MCBRIDE ROAD MAINTENANCE AND EMERGENCY RESERVATION EXIT ROUTE:
BIA/ROADS MAINTENANCE PROGRAM**

The Quinault Reservation is located in Grays Harbor County in the village of Taholah, Washington; a rural isolated and economically deprived area. The village of Taholah lies in a tsunami danger zone. The site of the village is barely above sea level and experts have determined that the sea level is rising because of global warming patterns. For Taholah, tsunami is a health and safety risk factor that we must live with everyday. The Quinault Reservation is interlaced with thousands of miles of roads that are left over from large logging contracts that ended in about 1980. Most of these roads do not have the required right-of-way and do not receive funding for maintenance.

The village of Taholah is accessible via SR 109 that parallels the Pacific Ocean. The McBride Road, a single forest road, is the only escapement route available to the 1,000 community members of the Quinault Indian Nation living in the village of Taholah. Its state of disrepair necessitates that immediate action be taken to bring the road up to a Class B gravel road status to be used in cases of emergency. The cost for this project is \$876,500 to repair 10.75 miles and could be accomplished within a 3-month time frame during dry weather conditions. The Project will create four new jobs in right-of-way acquisition and road engineering and will impact about 400 jobs of timber workers, fishermen, and fishing guides that rely on these roads for their livelihood.

Major portions of this route are at sea level. What is particularly important to understand is that the portions of this road above sea level are susceptible to mudslides. Three such mudslides have occurred in the past five years. In a single event, the road blocked access for 3 days. Medical needs for village people became an issue, while those in need of kidney dialysis were particularly affected. Some tribal members were able to evacuate the village by using another, longer alternate route. Still, this application is unsafe for use by the general public because the forests roads are not patrolled, well maintained, have limited signage and cell reception.

Thank you for allowing me to provide this testimony on behalf of the Quinault Indian Nation.