



# United States Department of the Interior



## FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE Mountain-Prairie Region

IN REPLY REFER TO:

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Memorandum

JAN 18 2005

To: \_\_\_\_\_, National Bison Range

From: Acting Assistant Regional Director, National Wildlife Refuge System, Region 6

Subject: FY 2005-2006 Annual Funding Agreement (AFA) between the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) and the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes (CSKT)

On December 15, 2004, the subject AFA was signed by representatives of the Service and the CSKT. The agreement is currently pending Congressional review and approval. Barring intervention by Congress, the AFA will become effective March 15, 2005.

As you are aware, the AFA provides that CSKT will perform some of the Service activities at the National Bison Range (NBR) for the remainder of FY 2005 and for FY 2006. These activities include elements of the biology, fire, maintenance, and visitor services programs at NBR. While the Service retains ownership and management authority over NBR, the impact on those currently employed at NBR is significant.

You have been identified as one of the *Affected Federal Employees* under the AFA. An *Affected Federal Employee* is a Service employee who: "A. Prior to the date of execution of this AFA was assigned to perform an Activity; B. But for [the] AFA would continue to perform the Activity during the terms of [the] AFA; and C. Whose employment the Service would terminate in the absence of continued employment with the Service or the CSKT as provided in [the] AFA." (AFA, pg. 3)

The AFA provides options to those *Affected Federal Employees* for continued future employment. Pages 16-18 of the AFA outline the following available options:

1. Intergovernmental Personnel Act (IPA). This option provides continued employment with the Service under an IPA assignment to CSKT.
2. Employment by CSKT with CSKT Benefits. This is direct employment by CSKT as a CSKT employee with CSKT benefits.
3. Employment by CSKT with Federal Benefits. This option provides for direct employment by CSKT with *Affected Federal Employees* opting to retain their Federal benefits.

4. Reassignment. This option, where practicable, allows for the reassignment of *Affected Federal Employees* by the Service.

Although not specifically stated in the AFA, failure to elect one of these options will result in your separation from the Service through Reduction-in-Force (RIF) procedures.

These are difficult times and I appreciate the frustrations you and your co-workers are facing. We have come through a lengthy and arduous negotiation and, upon approval, we anticipate implementing the AFA in a manner supportive of our stewardship responsibilities for NBR.

No doubt your outlook on life as a Service employee and your future with this Agency has been shaken. I am committed to making this transition as smooth as possible for the Service and NBR, for you and all NBR employees, and for the CSKT and the responsibilities and obligations they have undertaken.

My commitment to you and the other employees at NBR affected by the AFA was that each of you would have a job with the Service elsewhere within this Region, if and when the time came and you chose to continue your employment with the Service. That time has now come.

Attached is an Employment Election Form on which you can identify your choice for continued employment under the provisions of the AFA. I am asking you to make an election and return it to Steve Kallin, Refuge Manager, National Bison Range, no later than February 18, 2005. You will note that a fifth option, that of not choosing any of the employment options, has been identified. If you choose not to select any of the four options identified, you will be removed from your position via RIF procedures.

Attachment



**EMPLOYMENT ELECTION FORM**  
Under the provisions of the  
**FY2005-2006 ANNUAL FUNDING AGREEMENT**  
**BETWEEN THE**  
**U.S. FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE**  
**AND THE**  
**CONFEDERATED SALISH AND KOOTENAI TRIBES**  
**OF THE FLATHEAD RESERVATION**

As an *Affected Federal Employee*, covered under the terms of this Annual Funding Agreement, I understand that my options for continued employment as outlined in the agreement are as follows:

Please select one of the following options:

\_\_\_\_\_ Intergovernmental Personnel Act (IPA). This option provides continued employment with the Service under an IPA assignment to CSKT.

\_\_\_\_\_ Employment by CSKT with CSKT Benefits. This is direct employment by CSKT as a CSKT employee with CSKT benefits.

\_\_\_\_\_ Employment by CSKT with Federal Benefits. This option provides for direct Employment by CSKT with *Affected Federal Employees* opting to retain their Federal benefits.

\_\_\_\_\_ Reassignment. This option, where practicable, allows for the reassignment of *Affected Federal Employees* by the Service.

\_\_\_\_\_ None of the Above. I understand that by electing this option I will be removed from my position through appropriate Reduction-in-Force procedures which may result in my separation from the Federal Service.

This form is to be completed and returned to Steve Kallin, Refuge Manager, National Bison Range, 132 Bison Range Road, Moiese, Montana, 59824, no later than February 18, 2005.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Employee

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date