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Assistant Secretary Washburn Approves Tribal HEARTH Act Applications to Better Facilitate Economic Development on their Reservations

*Ewiiapaayp Band of Kumeyaay Indians and Kaw Nation of Oklahoma are the
Latest Tribes Approved to Process Economic Development Leases without BIA Approval*

Washington – Assistant Secretary-Indian Affairs Kevin K. Washburn announced today that the Ewiiapaayp Band of Kumeyaay Indians and the Kaw Nation of Oklahoma are the latest tribes to receive approval to handle their own leasing of Indian lands without having to obtain the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) approval.

The Ewiiapaayp Band of Kumeyaay Indians of Alpine, California will use the authority for business site leases for general economic development. The Kaw Tribe of Oklahoma located in Kaw City, Oklahoma, plans to authorize leases for business sites and to develop renewable energy projects.

“The very essence of self-determination is that it should be the tribe that decides how its lands may be used for the good of its members, and that is what the HEARTH Act does,” said Assistant Secretary Washburn. “These efforts can have a real impact on economic development in Indian country. These initiatives help strengthen tribal self-reliance and secure the well-being of future generations.”

The Helping Expedite and Advance Responsible Tribal Homeownership Act ([HEARTH Act](#)), signed by President Obama in July 2012, restores the authority of federally recognized tribes to develop and implement their own laws governing the long-term leasing of Indian lands for residential, business, renewable energy and other purposes. Upon one-time approval of these tribal regulations by the Department of the Interior, tribes have the authority to process land leases without Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) approval, greatly expediting the approval of leases for homes and small businesses in Indian Country. So far, Interior has approved eight tribal leasing codes under the HEARTH Act.

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