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President Obama Signs *Cobell* Settlement, Closes Chapter on Historic Injustices

NCAI President Encouraged Heading into Second Obama White Tribal Nations Conference

WASHINGTON, D.C. - December 08, 2010 - President Obama signed into law today the Claims Resolution Act of 2010 which included the \$3.4 billion *Cobell* Settlement and major tribal water settlements that have been at the forefront of Indian Country's legislative agenda.

"The President and the Congress have continued to exhibit a renewed determination to honor the federal trust responsibility to tribal nations and Indian people," said Jefferson Keel, President of the National Congress of American Indians (NCAI), the oldest, largest, and most representative American Indian and Alaska Native organization in the country. "Today's ceremony is another concrete example of this administration's commitment to work with members of Congress to honor our historic, nation-to-nation relationship. Tribal leaders look forward to meeting with the President and his administration next week at the White House Tribal Nations Conference and continue building our vision for strengthening Indian Country."

The signing of the *Cobell* settlement, which resolves a long running class action litigation over mismanagement of Indian trust funds, comes one week prior to the President's Tribal Nations Conference, the second of his Administration. Leaders from the 565 federally recognized tribal nations have been invited by the White House, to the Tribal Nations Conference in Washington, D.C. on December 16, 2010.

The *Cobell* settlement also includes payment for resource mismanagement and funds for consolidation of fractionated lands. The case has been pending since 1996. In the last month, the *Cobell* Settlement moved forward rapidly in the Senate as budget neutral legislation, after lingering for the last year in both houses. Unresolved for fourteen years, the settlement was part of a number of historic measures included in the Claims Resolution Act of 2010. In addition to the *Cobell* Settlement, historic water settlements vital to Indian Country, totaling over \$1 billion, were passed as part H.R. 4387. The water settlements involved the Crow Tribe, Taos Pueblo, the White Mountain Apache Tribe, and the Aamodt Settlement including the Pueblos of Nambe, Pojoaque, San Ildefonso and Tesuque.

About The National Congress of American Indians:

Founded in 1944, the National Congress of American Indians is the oldest, largest and most representative American Indian and Alaska Native organization in the country. NCAI advocates on behalf of tribal governments and communities, promoting strong tribal-federal government-to-government policies, and promoting a better understanding among the general public regarding American Indian and Alaska Native governments, people and rights. For more information visit www.ncai.org

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[Map](#)

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