



**E. SCOTT PRUITT**  
**ADMINISTRATOR**

October 11, 2017

**MEMORANDUM**

**SUBJECT:** Reaffirmation of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's Indian Policy

**FROM:** E. Scott Pruitt

**TO:** All EPA Employees

Two handwritten signatures are present. The first is a large, stylized signature in blue ink that appears to read "Scott Pruitt". The second is a smaller signature in black ink to the right, which appears to read "E. A. [unclear]".

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has long recognized the importance of partnering with tribal governments in fulfilling the EPA's core mission. In fact, this agency was the first federal agency to adopt a formal Indian Policy, which memorialized the principles that would guide this agency in its tribal relationships. Today, I am proud to formally reaffirm that policy.

Unlike other partnerships, the United States has a unique legal relationship with tribal governments based on the Constitution, treaties, statutes, executive orders and court decisions. Through that authority, the EPA recognizes the right of the tribes to self-determination and acknowledges the federal government's trust responsibility to tribes. The EPA works with tribes on a government-to-government basis to protect the land, air and water in Indian Country.

This policy provides the foundation for the agency's tribal interactions and relationships with federally recognized tribes. It is also a framework that continues to inform the EPA's ongoing work with tribal governments and aligns with the cooperative federalism model to support protection of human health and the environment. Many significant milestones and success in the EPA-tribal environmental partnership can be directly traced to the EPA Indian Policy and the EPA-staff commitment to the EPA Indian Policy.

Today's reaffirmation of the Indian Policy highlights the importance of our relationship with tribal governments. Our work in Indian Country is crosscutting and affects all aspects of the EPA's day-to-day functions. It is only through continued partnership with tribes that we can truly achieve a cleaner, healthier and more prosperous America today and for future generations.

It is an important time in our partnership with tribes as the EPA builds on past successes and strives to meet current and future environmental challenges in and surrounding Indian

Country. I look forward to your assistance in advancing our strong partnership with tribal governments to protect human health and to safeguard our shared environment.

Attachment