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Special Trustee Advisory Board Meets in Palm Springs, CA
*Special Trustee presents Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians with recognition
for work of Chairman Richard Milanovich*

WASHINGTON, D.C – The Office of The Special Trustee for American Indians announces the first meeting of the Special Trustee Advisory Board of 2016, March 1-2 in Palm Springs CA.

Honored at the Special Trustee Advisory Board meeting, Richard Milanovich was elected Chairman of the Agua Caliente Band in 1984, after returning from serving in the U.S. Army, and became a major figure in the development of casino operations on Indian land in the region and California. Through his vision and leadership, the Agua Caliente Band became one of the most politically prominent Native American Tribes in the United States. As Chairman, he was regularly invited to the White House to consult with the President and other political officials. The revenue generated by tribal developments spearheaded by Chairman Milanovich has allowed the tribe to develop self-sufficiency through education, cultural preservation, housing, and health care programs.

In addition to his duties as tribal chairman, Milanovich served on the Advisory Board to the Office of the Special Trustee (OST) from 2004 until 2012.

“Chairman Milanovich was an incredible leader who focused his work on the advancement of our Tribe,” said Jeff L. Grubbe, current Tribal Chairman of the Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians. “He has an extraordinary legacy that permeates throughout the halls of power in the state and federal governments. He helped shape us into who the Agua Caliente are today. For that, we continue to be inspired by him as we carry on the work of the Tribe. We are touched and honored by the recent recognition of Chairman Milanovich by the Office of the Special Trustee for American Indians at its recent Advisory Board meeting in Palm Springs.”

“As we gather to work on important Indian Country issues, it’s important to take time to recognize those that have contributed to the legacy of improvement in trust management that OST has come to represent,” said Vince Logan, Special Trustee. “Chairman Milanovich was dedicated to serving his people, a dedication that drove his everyday work.”

The meeting addressed important topics for the board including recommendations to improve OST and its business practices, how to improve service to beneficiaries, as well as development of communications strategy recommendations. The Board also learned more about the economic

development undertaken by Agua Caliente. The Special Trustee Advisory Board convenes two to three times a year, with more meetings scheduled at the discretion of the Special Trustee.

“Because of the gracious hospitality of the Agua Caliente band, we were able to address the important items on the agenda right away,” said Logan. “The first meeting of the year helps set the tone for what we hope to accomplish. We made major in-roads in the short time that we spent together.”

The Special Trustee Advisory Board consists of nine members, appointed by the Special Trustee and vetted by the White House, and advises on all matters within the jurisdiction of the Special Trustee. Legislated by the American Indian Trust Fund Management Reform Act of 1994, the Advisory Board consists of five members that represent trust fund account holders, both Tribal and Individual Indian Money Accounts. Additional members of the Advisory Board include two members that have hands-on experience in trust fund and financial management, one member versed in fiduciary investment management, and a final member, from academia, with extensive knowledge of the general management of large organizations.

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