

NEWS RELEASE – FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

UTE INDIAN TRIBE SUCCESSFULLY RESTORES 19 ACRES OF LAND TO TRUST STATUS

Ft. Duchesne, UT December 22, 2022

On April 8, 2022, the Acting Superintendent, Bureau of Indian Affairs, U.S. Department of the Interior (“BIA”), issued a notice of determination to approve the fee-to-trust application to acquire real property in trust for the Ute Indian Tribe of the Uintah and Ouray Reservation (“Tribe”), Fort Duchesne, Utah. The property is known as the Ute Oilfield Property and is located within the exterior boundaries of the Reservation. The property is located at 1348 3000 West, Roosevelt, Utah, and contains 19.00 acres. The property is 0.40 miles directly north of the Roosevelt Municipal Airport apron or ramp.

Pursuant to 25 C.F.R. § 151.12(b), the BIA provided copies of this decision to all parties that were notified of (or commented on) the application, with notice of their administrative appeal rights. In accordance with the regulations set forth in 43 C.F.R. § 4.310-4.340, any appeals of the BIA decision to approve the proposed acquisition had to be made thirty (30) days following the notice of decision, which ended on May 7, 2022. No appeals were received and therefore, the BIA has taken such land into trust.

The Tribe historically resided in an area which included parts of present-day Utah, Colorado, Wyoming, and New Mexico. Due to pressures from settlers in Utah and Colorado, the Uintah, White River and Uncompahgre (Tabeguache) bands of Utes were removed to lands reserved by the United States for the Utes under the Treaties of December 30, 1849, 9 Stat. 984; October 7, 1863, 13 Stat. 637; and March 2, 1868, 15 Stat. 619; and an Act of Congress on June 15, 1880, 21 Stat. 199. On October 3, 1861, President Lincoln issued an executive order formally setting apart and reserving the Uintah Valley Reservation. Congress ratified the creation of the Uintah Valley Reservation, by Act of Congress on May 5, 1864, 13 Stat. 63. On January 5, 1882, President Arthur issued an executive order establishing the Uncompahgre Reservation in Utah pursuant to the Act of Congress on June 15, 1880, 21 Stat. 199, after determining that there were no suitable agricultural lands available in Colorado. Following the passage of the Allotment Act, lands previously set aside for the Tribe were allotted and opened for homesteading. This created checkerboard ownership and jurisdiction on and near the Reservation. The Business Committee is committed to correcting this wrong and currently has several fee-to-trust applications pending before BIA. With the approval of the Ute Oilfield Property, the Business Committee plans to fully pursue the restoration of lands previously set aside for the Tribe to trust status.

The Tribe plans to continue utilizing the Ute Oilfield Property to promote its economic endeavors. The Ute Oilfield Property is currently developed as a maintenance shop, office building, graded parking, and storage areas for the Tribe’s Ute Oilfield Water Services enterprise. Established in 1999, Ute Oilfield Water Services provides water hauling services for the Uintah Basin’s oil and gas industry with over 40 trucks running every day. The Business Committee expressly thanks the BIA Uintah and Ouray Agency Acting Superintendent and office staff for their assistance, support and diligence in processing and approving the Ute Oilfield Property fee-to-trust application for the Tribe.

About the Ute Indian Tribe - The Ute Indian Tribe resides on the Uintah and Ouray Reservation in northeastern Utah. Three bands of Utes comprise the Ute Indian Tribe: the Whiteriver Band, the Uncompahgre Band and the Uintah Band. The Tribe has a membership of more than three thousand individuals, with over half living on the Uintah and Ouray Reservation. The Ute Indian Tribe operates its own Tribal government and oversees approximately 1.3 million acres of trust land which contains significant oil and gas deposits. The Tribal Business Committee is the governing council of the Tribe.