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BLM Distributes \$967,000 in "PILT" Checks to North Dakota Counties for Tax-Exempt Lands

BILLINGS – North Dakota counties will receive nearly \$967,000 for fiscal year 2003 to compensate them for tax-exempt federal lands within their boundaries. This year's payment is about \$18,000 more than last year's total.

Secretary of the Interior Gale Norton continues the practice begun in 2002 of sending the PILT payments three months earlier than in previous years. The accelerated payment schedule represents the Secretary's continuing effort to coordinate with local governments as they budget for their fiscal years, many of which begin on July 1.

"PILT payments exemplify the Secretary's commitment to communication, coordination, and consultation, all in the service of conservation," said BLM Director Kathleen Clarke. "This money helps communities pay for roads, search-and-rescue operations, and other services," she added.

Congress appropriates funds for PILT payments to eligible units of local government each year. BLM calculates the payment amounts using a formula based on population and the amount of federal land in a jurisdiction. Federal revenue transferred to local governments under other programs, such as income generated from the use of public land for livestock grazing, timber harvests, and mineral receipts, is deducted from the receiving county's PILT payments.

This year, some counties will receive slightly reduced PILT payments to adjust for increased revenue received during the previous fiscal year under the Secure Rural Schools and Community Self-Determination Act. This Act provides payments to compensate certain counties for declining timber receipts. The combination of PILT payments and payments under the Secure Rural Schools Act, however, will result in a higher overall payment to affected counties. Changes in PILT payments can also occur based on the amount that Congress appropriates for the program in a given fiscal year.

This year's PILT payments of \$218,172,589 represent an increase of more than \$8.8 million over fiscal year 2002. Including this year's payments, the BLM has distributed over \$3.2 billion to local governments since the program began in 1977.

All states except Rhode Island, which has almost no federal land, are receiving PILT payments in 2003. The District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, Guam, and the Virgin Islands also receive PILT payments. The states whose local governments receive the most under the program this year are New Mexico, California, and Utah. A complete list of payments to North Dakota counties is attached.

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NORTH DAKOTA PILT 2003

Local Unit of Government	Total Paid This FY
Barnes	\$8,413
Benson	\$4,640
Billings	\$56,953
Bottineau	\$174
Bowman	\$7,195
Burke	\$219
Burleigh	\$20,010
Cavalier	\$260
Dickey	\$864
Divide	\$1,817
Dunn	\$58,807
Eddy	\$628
Emmons	\$42,861
Golden Valley	\$15,548
Grand Forks	\$1,385
Grant	\$12,114
Griggs	\$2,270
Kidder	\$3,156
Logan	\$1,136
McHenry	\$3,064
McIntosh	\$622

Local Unit of Government	Total Paid This FY
McKenzie	\$92,976
McLean	207,856
Mercer	36,079
Morton	18,333
Mountrail	81,835
Pierce	4,655
Ramsey	506
Ransom	50,796
Renville	324
Richland	33,502
Rolette	144
Sargent	2,309
Sheridan	39,600
Sioux	41,531
Slope	24,345
Stark	810
Steele	185
Stutsman	12,326
Walsh	631
Ward	434
Wells	11,355
Williams	64,003
TOTAL	\$966,671