

BIA/Land Owners/OMC Meeting

<http://www.Osages-You-Need-To-Know.com>

January 17, 2013

The 5 or 6 largest ranchers in the county have formed some type of “land owners assoc.” and have been causing a lot of grief to our producers for the last several years concerning access to our Minerals Estate. The Minerals Council was hearing the producer’s side of the story, which was certainly bad for the producers and for us, but they had never really been told the land owners side of the story. Today, they heard the land owners side of things, and guess who they were complaining about. Yup. The BIA!

BIA director Mike Black told some of the Council today that several major land owners had been requesting a meeting with the upper level BIA people for several months. That meeting finally came together today. Much to the disgust of several Shareholders and others, the meeting was closed to all but the principals who set up the meeting. Several from the BIA, including Black, the DOI, the solicitor from Washington, the Osage Minerals Council, and representatives from the Reed Ranch, the Drummond Ranches, the Nature Conservative, the Mormon Church properties, and a couple of others, most with their lawyers, were present.

The ranchers had a theme set for the meeting. It was “FRUSTRATION” They adamantly complained that the only place for them to take their problems was to the BIA. Further, they complained that when they had problems with spills of oil and salt water, physical damage to their property, including loss of livestock, that the BIA would rarely respond, and when they did, the land owners never got the problems fully resolved and there were no other remedies available.

It is apparent that they had decided that locking producers out at every opportunity was the only way they could attract enough attention to get the BIA to take care of their business.

Well, it looks like it worked. They got their meeting, and not only that, 2 or 3 more meetings will be scheduled shortly to address the concerns of all the smaller land owners. In private discussions, some of the Minerals Council tell me that the BIA seemed to agree that the primary problem was laid at the feet of the BIA today, and it looks like BIA has accepted the responsibility, and they intend to give it their full attention and see to it that land owners problems are resolved. They realize that changing CFR’s will not resolve this issue. Adequate rules already exist. It’s just that nobody was enforcing the rules, and nobody was going far enough up the ladder of responsibility to make their complaints, probably because nobody knew exactly who to talk to.

Some of the MC explained to these ranchers today that, although this was totally the responsibility of the BIA, and that the MC had no authority to become directly involved, that they were very willing to relay any concerns to the proper authorities and apply what pressure they could to get problems fixed.

It looks like things are about to start improving in this area, also.

Ray McClain, Osage Shareholder