

# **Summary: Investigation of Royalty Fraud, Turtle Mountain Reservation, ND**

**Report Date: July 30, 2014**

OIG investigated allegations made by a member of the Chippewa Band of Indians, Turtle Mountain Reservation, ND. The complainant alleged that the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA), the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), Tame Oil Company (TOC), and Marathon Oil and Gas Company were involved in a conspiracy to deplete oil and gas resources beneath his land, thereby depriving him of royalties.

The investigation revealed that four wells surrounding the complainant's property could have produced enough oil to partially drain the assets beneath the complainant's land. We found no evidence, however, to substantiate that (1) BIA, BLM, TOC, or Marathon conspired to capture or steal oil and gas reserves beneath the complainant's land; (2) BIA had used enticing language in a memo to encourage anyone, including the complainant, to sign a current oil and gas lease; or (3) that the Federal Government should have marketed the complainant's assets.

We provided the report to BLM for any action deemed appropriate.

*This is a summary of an investigative report that was issued internally to the U.S. Department of the Interior. This summary was posted to the web on April 10, 2015.*

