

White Earth Reservation Business Committee

Public Relations

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News Release

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White Earth Nation awarded \$20.6 million from Cares Act

WHITE EARTH, MINN. – White Earth Nation received \$20.6 million of the \$8 billion set aside for tribal governments from the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act (CARES Act).

The CARES Act established the Coronavirus Relief Fund which is to be used to make payments for specified uses to tribal governments to cover costs that 1) are necessary expenditures incurred due to the public health emergency with respect to COVID-19; 2) were not accounted for in the budget most recently approved as of March 27 (the date the CARES Act was enacted); and 3) were incurred during the period that began March 1 and ends on December 30.

“We want to thank Minnesota Senator Tina Smith for all her hard work in securing these much-needed funds for the White Earth Nation,” said District III Representative Eugene “Umsy” Tibbetts. “We are still in the process of deciding how the money will be used in the best interests of our members, communities and the Reservation Business Committee programs.” Senator Smith serves on the US Senate Committee of Indian Affairs.

“In light of the current COVID-19 situation, the funding provided to White Earth through the CARES Act is a tremendous tool enabling the Emergency Management Team to further strengthen preparedness efforts in the event of a greater statewide spread,” said Ed Snetsinger, Incident Commander of the White Earth Emergency Management Team. “This funding will ensure we’re firing on all cylinders in the prevention and protection of White Earth in the battle against COVID-19.”

The Department of Treasury published guidance on its interpretation of the limits for permissible use of the Fund payments. The U.S. Department of Treasury reported that it intended to immediately distribute \$4.8 billion (60 percent of the \$8 billion set aside) to tribes based on population data, with a minimum amount set at \$100,000. The remaining \$3.2 billion (40 percent of the \$8 billion) is expected to be distributed to tribes based on the total number of persons employed by the Indian tribe and their tribally-owned entities. It is possible that the

White Earth Nation will receive additional money when that amount is calculated by the U.S. Department of Treasury.