

## Cobell Settlement Land Buy-Back Program Speaker Bio

### Robyn L. Interpreter, Esq.

Robyn Interpreter spoke about Ethical Issues in Representing Allottees. She conducts a step-by-step analysis, which is exactly what any attorney in the situation of representing an allottee should do, to determine when and how ethical concerns might present themselves in that representation. The trust responsibility of the federal government raises the first issue: Is there a conflict between the trust responsibility to a tribe and the trust responsibility to an allottee? Allottees should pay close attention to what is happening in the buy-back context, as the government may not fully represent their interests when they are also working with the tribes.

Some allotment parcels are better placed for future development and should draw a bigger purchase price: Who is taking that into consideration? How will attorney fees be paid if an attorney represents a selling allottee? What do attorneys need to do to qualify to practice on specific reservations? Finally, how do the specific ethic rules impact what you need to know and how you should proceed for your client?



Robyn Interpreter is a founding partner in the law firm of Montgomery & Interpreter, PLC, in Scottsdale, Arizona, and is a graduate of the University of Arizona with a juris doctorate and master's degree in American Indian studies. For more than a decade, Ms. Interpreter has devoted her practice to representing Indian tribes and allottees on a variety of issues, including resources development, estate planning, and real estate transactions. Her practice has specifically included representation of allottees in the leasing and sales of allotments, the creation of estate plans and wills for allottees, which address the federal requirements for passing on these lands to heirs, and the probate of Indian estates before the Probate Division of the Bureau of Indian Affairs' Office of Hearings and Appeals. From her representation of tribes as governmental entities and of allottees, as both individuals and collective groups, she has gained a unique perspective on the significant challenges faced by allottees in addressing their concerns related to the management, sale, and disposition of federal Indian allotments. For all of these concerns, Ms. Interpreter is devoted to providing practical, real-world strategies and solutions for her clients on these issues faced by tribes and allottees.