
ATTACHMENT 16

Law Offices of Karla D. Bell

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Via U.S. Mail

November 11, 2005

Mr. Troy Burdick, Superintendent
Bureau of Indian Affairs
650 Capital Mall
Suite 8-500
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: California Valley Miwok Tribe

Dear Mr. Burdick:

On October 7, 2005 the California Valley Miwok Tribe (the "Tribe") published for the following public notice:

"The California Valley Miwok Tribe, a Federally Recognized Native American Tribe formerly known as the 'Sheep Ranch Rancheria' (the "Tribe") is currently accepting applications for membership. Anyone who (i) has an ancestral connection with the Tribe; (ii) can prove they are of Miwok descent; (iii) is not a member of another Federal or State recognized Indian Tribe (or organized band or community) and (iv) is at least 18 years old, may send a request for an application to enroll in the Tribe"

This public notice was published in The Record, Stockton; The Modesto Bee, Merced Sun-Star, and the Calaveras Enterprise. These local newspapers were selected in an effort to reach and identify the maximum number of individuals that may be eligible to enroll in the Tribe.

Since the publication of the above notice over 30 days ago, the Tribe has received a total of three (3) inquires. Assuming that these individuals submit enrollment applications and are indeed eligible to join the Tribe, the Tribe will again request that your office forward records and information regarding the applicants' Indian heritage and ancestry. In addition to any requests for information of new applicants that may follow, on August 26, 2005, a letter under my signature was sent you requesting information that you agreed to forward during our July 8, 2005 meeting. To date, I have not received this information or a response to my letter dated August 26, 2005 which also seeks contact information for Mr. Melvin Dixie.

In addition, the Tribe has informed the individuals that were identified in a letter dated February 24, 2005 under my signature that your office will not release necessary information to the Tribe without a release. Releases were sent to each of the identified

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individuals to sign and forward to your office. To date, we have not received an update regarding the status of those releases nor the requested information.

Given your office's failure to respond to my requests on behalf of the Tribe and requests directly from the Tribe, it appears that all of the Tribe's efforts towards its enrollment matters have been ignored by your office. It is our hope that your office will not impede the Tribe efforts to move forward with its enrollment efforts and your office will forward information that has been requested.

On behalf of the Tribe, we look forward to any information that your office can provide. If you have any questions regarding enrollment or membership matters, please feel free to contact me. Thank you in advance for your assistance.

Sincerely,

Karla D. Bell

cc: Silvia Burley, Chairperson
Phil Thompson, Esq.
George Steele, Esq.