



RESTORE HETCH HETCHY

Yosemite National Park

November 16, 2021

Mr. Bryan Newland
Assistant Secretary – Indian Affairs
1849 C Street, NW, MS-4071 MIB
Washington, D.C. 20240

Re: **Urgent Action Needed – Prior to November 17** for Petitioner #82
the Southern Sierra Miwuk Nation, CA for Federal Acknowledgment

Dear Assistant Secretary Newland:

Restore Hetch Hetchy supports federal acknowledgment of the Southern Sierra Miwuk Nation (“Tribe”), a distinct Indian community within Mariposa County. The Southern Sierra Miwuk people made their home in this area long before Mariposa County was created and remain an active and important tribal community within the county and the region.

It is troubling to learn that a Proposed Finding issued by the Assistant Secretary-Indian Affairs on November 16, 2018 would, if not reversed, deny the Tribe acknowledgment as a federally recognized tribe. This finding indicated the Tribe does not constitute a distinct Indian community “at present”, something local residents, as well as the National Park Service, know to be wholly inaccurate. The Tribe brings distinct cultural practices and values to the local community. In addition, the Southern Sierra Miwuk Nation has every right to engage as a federally recognized tribe to help determine a more inclusive future of Yosemite National Park, including potential restoration of Hetch Hetchy Valley.

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the fullest extent of the law.



Assistant Secretary Newland

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I respectfully ask that you give every possible consideration to the Tribe's nearly 40-year effort seeking self-determination, self-governance, and acknowledgment through the federal recognition process. This long overdue designation will allow the Tribe to acquire its tribal sovereignty rights, and permit tribal members to pursue health benefits, scholarships for higher education, and other funding opportunities to support their wellbeing and cultural continuance.

Thank you for your consideration of this matter that is so critical to the Southern Sierra Miwuk Nation.

Sincerely,



Spreck Rosekrans
Executive Director

Cc:

Sandra Chapman, Chairperson, Southern Sierra Miwuk Nation
Deb Haaland, Secretary of the Interior
Lee Fleming, Director, Office of Federal Acknowledgement
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