

San Manuel Band of Mission Indians

June 16, 2014

The Honorable Kevin Washburn
Assistant Secretary for Indian Affairs
U.S. Department of the Interior
1849 C Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20036

RE: Tribal Consultation on the Proposed Revisions to the Federal Acknowledgment as an Indian Tribe Process

Dear Assistant Secretary Washburn:

We have received the proposed revisions to the process for determining whether a group should be acknowledged as an Indian tribe by the United States. The proposed rule includes a list of dates, locations and times for the Department to consult with tribal governments. We are concerned that this schedule does not include a location in Southern California.

This is a historically important endeavor. The process and standards that the federal government uses to determine tribal and individual Indian identity have great meaning to established Indian tribes, as well as those who seek federal acknowledgment. As you know, tribes in Southern California have raised serious concerns with changes to the rule that would water down the standards that a petitioning group must meet to demonstrate tribal and individual Indian identity.

We write to respectfully request that you add a location in Southern California to your formal consultation schedule with tribal governments on the federal acknowledgment regulations. This would give tribal leaders from this area of the country a better opportunity to have our voices heard and our concerns addressed.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Lynn R. Valbuena
Chairwoman

cc: California Congressional Delegation
San Manuel Band of Mission Indians