Indian Affairs - Office of Public Affairs

Media Contact: Nedra Darling, OPA-IA Phone: 202-219-4152
For Immediate Release: September 27, 2001
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(WASHINGTON, D.C.) – Assistant Secretary – Indian Affairs Neal A. McCaleb today announced he has issued a Notice of Proposed Finding whereby he proposes to decline to acknowledge that the Nipmuc Nation headquartered in Sutton, Mass., (petition #69A) exists as an Indian tribe within the meaning of Federal law. The proposed finding is based on a determination that the petitioner does not satisfy four of seven mandatory criteria for Federal acknowledgment under 25 CFR Part 83, the Federal acknowledgment regulations, and therefore does not meet the requirements for a government-to-government relationship with the United States.

The petitioner did not satisfy criteria 83.7(a), 83.7(b), 83.7(c) and 83.7(e) of the regulations. Criterion 83.7(a) requires the petitioner to have been identified on a substantially continuous basis as an American Indian entity. Criterion 83.7(b) requires the petitioner to have maintained a continuous community from historical times until the present. Criterion 83.7(c) requires the petitioner to have maintained political authority or influence on a substantially continuous basis from historical times until the present. Criterion 83.7(e) requires the petitioner's current members to have descended from an historical Indian tribe or tribes which combined and functioned as a single autonomous political entity.

Having completed his review, the Assistant Secretary will publish the Notice of the Proposed Finding on the Nipmuc Nation in the Federal Register. As provided by 25 CFR 83.10(i), the petitioner or any individual or organization wishing to challenge or support the proposed finding shall have 180 days after the notice's publication date to submit arguments and evidence to rebut or support the proposed finding.

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