Indian Affairs - Office of Public Affairs

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The Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) today issued a proposed finding for Federal acknowledgement of The Nipmuc Nation headquartered in Sutton, Massachusetts, saying the Nation (petitioner) meets the seven criteria for Federal acknowledgement under 25 CFR Part 83. The positive proposed finding states that the petitioner exists as an Indian tribe within the meaning of Federal law and meets the requirements for a government-to-government relationship with the United States. The Bureau found that a substantial portion of the petitioner's members have ancestry from the contact-era Nipmuc bands, except through the twelve Nipmuc "praying towns" established by missionary John Eliot in the 1660s and 1670s. After the King Philip's War of 1675-1676, there was continuity in the re-establishment of Hassanamisco and Chaubunagungamaug bands by prewar refugees who had gone to Natick, Massachusetts. There is continuity for both Hassanamisco and Chaubunagungamaug from the early 18th century through 1869, the date of the Massachusetts Enfranchisement Act and the commonwealth's termination of trust responsibility over the land and funds of the two reservation bands.

The Nipmuc Nation, formerly The Nipmuc Nation, Hassanamisco Band, will now be subject to a 180-day public comment period and a 60-day response period after which the Bureau will issue a final determination. If this final determination is also positive, then members of The Nipmuc Nation will be eligible for certain rights and benefits accorded to tribes that have Federal recognition, which establishes that a special government-to-government relationship exists between the tribe and the United States. Currently, there are 561 Federally recognized American Indian and Alaska Native tribes. The address of The Nipmuc Nation is 156 -BIA-Worcester-Providence Road, Suite 28, Sutton Square Mall, Sutton, MA 01527.

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