Indian Affairs - Office of Public Affairs

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The Department of the Interior is publishing notice in the Federal Register on its proposal to acknowledge the Grand Traverse Band of Ottawa and Chippewa Indians bf Northern Michigan as an Indian tribe, Assistant Secretary Forrest Gerard said today

The formal acknowledgment as an Indian tribe, which includes the recognition of a government to-government relationship with the United States, would entitle the Grand Traverse Band to the same privileges and immunities available to other federally recognized tribes by virtue of their status as Indian tribes.

Under regulations made effective in October of 1978, persons wishing to challenge the acknowledgment may submit their factual or legal arguments within 120 days of the publication of the notice. A report summarizing the evidence for the proposed decision is available from the Assistant Secretary - Indian Affairs, Department of the Interior,

18th & C Streets N.W., Washington, D.C. 20240. Comments on the proposed acknowledgment should be sent to the above address.

The Grand Traverse Band, which has about 300 members, is expected to be the first group formally acknowledged as a tribe under the 1978 regulations. The tribe has a 147.4 acre reservation in Leelanau County.

A total of 497 Indian or Alaska Native groups are now acknowledged by the Federal Government to be tribes. These groups are located in 27 states and include 218 Alaskan village groups.