Indian Affairs - Office of Public Affairs

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The Bureau of Indian Affairs announces that the Webster/Dudley Band of Chaubunagungamaug Nipmuck Indians of Dudley, Massachusetts does not exist as an Indian tribe within the meaning of Federal law. This notice is based on a determination that the petitioner does not satisfy criteria 83.7(a), 83.7(b), and 83.7(c) of 25 CFR Part 83 and therefore, does not meet the requirements for government-to-government relationship with the United States. Criterion Part 83.7(a) requires that the petitioner have been identified as an American Indian entity on a substantially continuous basis since 1900. Part 83.7(b), a predominant portion of the petitioning group comprises a distinct community and has existed as a community from historical times until the present. Part 83.7(c), the petitioner has maintained political influence or authority over its members as an autonomous entity from historical times until the present. As provided by 25 CFR 83.10(i), any individual or organization wishing to challenge the proposed finding may submit factual or legal arguments and evidence to rebut the evidence relied upon. This material must be submitted within 180 calendar days from the date of publication of the notice in the Federal Register.

The Nipmuc Tribal Council, Hassanamisco Reservation, in Grafton, Massachusetts, submitted a letter of intent to petition for Federal Acknowledgement on April 22, 1980, and was designated as petitioner #69. The Bureau of Indian Affairs placed the original petitioner #69, the Nipmuc Tribe (or Nipmuc Nation), on active consideration July 11, 1995. The Webster/Dudley Band of Chaubunagungamaug Nipmuck Indians submitted a letter of intent to petition for Federal acknowledgement on May 31, 1996, withdrawing from petitioner #69, and was designated as petitioner #69B.

This finding has been completed under the terms of the Bureau directive of February 7, 2000, published in the Federal Register on February 11, 2000 (65 FR 7052). Under the terms of the directive, this finding focuses on evaluating the specific conclusions and description of the group that the petitioners presented, attempting to show that it has met the seven mandatory criteria and maintained a tribal community up until the present. As provided by 25 CFR 83.10(i), any individual or organization wishing to challenge the proposed finding may submit factual or legal arguments and evidence to rebut the evidence relied upon. This material must be submitted within 180 calendar days from the date of publication of the notice in the Federal Register.