Match-E-Be-Nash-She-Wish Band Of Pottawatomi Indians Found To Meet Criteria

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Assistant Secretary for Indian Affairs Ada E. Deer on June 23 signed a preliminary decision that proposes extending Federal acknowledgment to the Match-e-be-nash-she-wish Band of Pottawatomi Indians of Bradley, MI. Assistant Secretary Deer said the petitioner meets all seven of the required criteria in the Code of Federal Regulations, Title 25, Section 83. 7, as modified by Section 83.8, and therefore qualifies for a government-to-government relationship with the United States.

The Match-e-be-nash-she-wish Band of Pottawatomi Indians (MBPI) now will be subject to a 180-day public comment period, after which the Bureau of Indian Affairs will issue a final determination. If this final determination also is positive, members of the tribe will be eligible for certain rights and benefits accorded tribes that have federal recognition. Currently there are 554 federally recognized American Indian and Alaska Native tribes.

The BIA's Branch of Acknowledgment and Research found that MBPI has been a predominantly Potawatomi Indian entity continuously since 1837 when two bands amalgamated on a 360-acre reserve known as the Griswold Mission, and now referred to as the Bradley settlement. The settlement is located 25 miles southeast of Grand Rapids, MI. The petitioner's ancestors participated as signatories of treaties in 1795, 1815, 1821, 1833, and 1855. The MBPI was named for Match-e-be-nash-she-wish, an ancestor who was a prominent 18th-century warrior in the Great Lake region. Currently more than two-thirds of the band's 140 members reside within 25 miles of the Bradley settlement.

The address of the tribe is 112 W. Superior Street, Wayland, MI 49348. The tribal representative is Bill Church, telephone (517) 627-0244.