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Washington, DC**

Date: 28 July 2023

To: The Honorable
Assistant Secretary-Indians Affairs

From: Authors David Stevenson, Shirley Barr-May and Cletties Pardee Self

Subject: Comment on Butte Tribe of Bayou Bourbeaux #402 petition

We submit this document to you and pray that you do not render Federal Recognition to the Butte Tribe for the following reasons:

A. We request that you deny Federal status due to the facts and evidence presented herein.

B. They are a splitter group of the, State recognized, Natchitoches Tribe of Louisiana.

At a membership meeting in Natchitoches, La. on 6 April 2019 member Rodger Collum and several family members threw their membership cards on the table and walked out. They all immediately met, a waiting, at the time, the Vice Chief of the Natchitoches Tribe, Belinda Brooks, and started signing membership forms for the creation of the Butte Tribe. See attachments.

C. We believe Section A's "Procedures for Federal Acknowledgment of Indian Tribes 25 CFR Part 83" otherwise exemption cannot be valid in this submittal.

D. We believe they have fabricated, embellished and exaggerated historical facts. See attachments.

E. The Butte submission is primary based on an oral history told by Rodger Collum. The details within his story are hard to believe since he was only 16 years old when his Grandfather, the last Chief, Clarence Desadier-1899-1969 died. See F-5 below.

F. In their Petition for Federal Acknowledgment of Butte Tribe of Bayou Bourbeaux:

1. Item - 3.1.5 Identification as an Indian entity in newspapers and books (25 CFR 83.11(a)(5)).
We contend that all of these noted entries, within the submission, were written and produced by Rodger Collum and Belinda Brooks. We also believe they paid for the articles to appear in the paper further paid for the oral history video. It is our opinion that this is self-recognition and does not meet the requirement of (25 CFR 83.11 (a) (5))

2. Item - 3.1.6 Identification as an Indian entity in relationships with Indian tribes or with national, regional, or state Indian organizations (25 CFR 83.11(a)(6))
"In February 2022, BTBB was approached by the Governor's Office of Louisiana as an indigenous tribe within the state to participate in a federally funded emergency preparedness project".

We believe this to be false. It is our opinion that the Butte Tribe obtained this as a 501 c (3) organization not as a Native American Tribe. They are not a State or Federal recognized tribe.

3. Item - 3.1.7 Identification as an Indian entity by the petitioner itself (25 CFR 83.11(a)(7)) and 3.2 Criterion #2: Community (25 CFR 83.11(b))

Again 99.9 per cent the information given is based on a story recalled by a 16 year old Rodger Collum. He is now recalling, in detail, facts known only to him.

4. Item - 3.6 Criterion #6: Unique Membership (25 CFR 83.11(f))

"The membership of BTBB are not members of any federally recognized Indian tribe. BTBB is petitioning for federal recognition with the submission of this petition document. In accordance with the documentation for 25 CFR 83.11(b) and (c) above, BTBB has functioned as a separate, politically autonomous community. This is discussed in more detail in the following section."

Again we submit the facts that show they are in fact members of our family and our community. They were members of our State Recognized Natchitoches Tribe before leaving and forming the Butte Tribe in 2019. They were not separate and autonomous.

5. Section 2.1 Oral History of Rodger Collum **"The chief has lived his entire 67 years on the same land his ancestors lived and died on. Raised and mentored by his elders".**

Records found do not support this claim. Further the "67 years" would make Rodger Collum birth year 1956 and make him 13 when his grandfather died in 1969. Page 9, of the submission, shows Rodger Collum was born in 1953 therefore 16.

G. Mounds and artifacts found and claimed on Rodger Collum's property are the ancestors of the Natchitoches Tribe.

H. The Butte Tribe have demanded their members participate in any activities scheduled. One example is a Gun raffle in 2022 in which they demanded all members to buy a raffle ticket. If not you would be placed on In-Active status. See Attachment D-6. We have also been told, if you were on the In-Active status your name would not be on the roll when they submitted to the BIA.

ATTACHMENTS

ATTACHMENT A - The Road Marker for **Marie Therese de la Grande Terre** was designed, purchased and installed by Shirley Barr-May, Cletties Pardee Self Founding members of the Natchitoches Tribe. In submission they state the "State of Louisiana" had it installed and fails to mention Natchitoches Tribe members that founded the marker. See

ATTACHMENT B - Examples of what we believe are fabrications.

ATTACHMENT C - Showing in 2017 **Belinda Brooks**, our Vice-Chief, now the Butte Tribe Vice-Chief, submitted and swore that our people and history was true and correct to obtain our State Recognition. Now they are claiming our documented history and ancestry

ATTACHMENT D - Facebook evidence from the Butte Tribe web site page- General subjects.


ATTACHMENT RC - Showing evidence about Rodger Collum's family and records that do not support "The chief has lived his entire 67 years on the same land his ancestors lived and died on. Raised and mentored by his elders".

7. We invite BIA, at any time, to come to Campti, Louisiana to investigate and interview us.

We, the below listed names, approve of this document and affirm to be true and correct to the best of our knowledge. Approval noted with a signature or by electronic means.

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Signatory for this document

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Natchitoches Tribe Founding Council Chief Gaye Lynn Pohlmeier - Electronic

Natchitoches Tribe Founding Council Chief Thomas Alemond - Electronic

Natchitoches Tribe Council Chief Monty Trichel ELECTRONIC

Natchitoches Tribe Founding Council Chief retired Mike Alemond - Electronic

Natchitoches Tribe Founding Council Chief Jacque Burchfield - Electronic

Natchitoches Tribe Founding Council Chief Belinda Smith Belinda Smith

Natchitoches Tribe Founding Council Chief Frank Perot ELECTRONIC

Natchitoches Tribe Founding Council Chief David Desadier - Electronic

**Attachments to this comment
available by request under the
Freedom of Information Act**