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**RECEIVED**

**MAR 05 2025**

**DOI/OS/AS-IA/OFA  
Washington, DC**

**March 3, 2025**

**Department of the Interior  
Office of the Assistant Secretary—Indian Affairs  
Attention: Office of Federal Acknowledgment  
Mail Stop 4071 MIB  
1849 C Street NW  
Washington, DC 20240**

**Subject: Concerns Regarding the Federal Recognition Petition #406 of the Salinan Tribe of Monterey & San Luis Obispo Counties, CA**

**Dear Office of Federal Acknowledgment,**

**My name is Penny Pierce Hurt, I write to you as the President of the Sacred Arrow Society Church, Inc a registered 501 (c) (3) non-profit, a recognized Elder and Cultural Preservation Administrator for the Xolon Salinan Tribe (Village). My purpose in reaching out is to address concerns regarding the use of my father's legacy and historical records in this petition for federal recognition submitted by the Salinan Tribe of Monterey and San Luis Obispo Counties (hereafter referred to as the "SLO group).**

**My father, Richard "Dick" Pierce, dedicated his life to preserving the history and sovereignty of our people. Upon his passing, I inherited the responsibility of safeguarding his extensive research and advocacy efforts on behalf of all Salinan People. It has come to my attention that the SLO group has referenced a letter my father wrote prior to his death in 2017, #77 of their petition bibliography, without consultation or acknowledgment of his lineage and rightful custodianship of that knowledge. Please see attached email dated, November 26, 2022, in which I specifically stated not to use my father's name or his works. I am currently consulting with legal counsel to address issues concerning data sovereignty and the misappropriation of my father's name and contributions.**

## **Personal and Cultural Connection**

As an adopted child, I was separated from my father at birth. However, he tirelessly searched for me, and we reunited in 1986. From that moment until his passing in 2017, he instilled in me the oral traditions and historical narratives of Toro Creek. I have been extensively interviewed by our tribal scholar, Ms. Karen Fontanetta, who has verified the accuracy and depth of my oral history. Given this, I challenge the SLO group to present their oral traditions with equal historical rigor and authenticity.

## **Concerns Regarding the SLO Petition**

The SLO group's petition lacks primary source documentation and misrepresents historical narratives. Below are specific concerns:

### **1. Misinterpretation of Tribal Formation**

- o The petition (Page 4) states that by the end of the 20th century, the Toro Creek Indians merged with others to form the Salinan Tribe of Monterey and San Luis Obispo Counties. This narrative omits crucial historical context and fails to acknowledge the broader Salinan Nation and its multiple tribal communities.

### **2. Exclusion of Key Salinan Figures and Entities**

- o The petition disregards the voices of many Salinan leaders and organizations, including: Bluejay Garcia, Joseph Ballesteros, Jennie Mousseaux, Donna Haro, and others. It also fails to recognize the *Tro'trawal* (The Village) and the Xolon Salinan Tribe (Village).

### **3. Inaccurate Citation of Scholarly Work**

- o Page 14 references the work of Randall Milliken and John Johnson using a citation (Reel 88, Frame 531) that does not align with the actual content of the Harrington notes. Similar discrepancies exist in their references to Jose Baylon (Reel 88, Frame 549) and Pacifico, a San Miguel Indian (Reel 87, Frame 995).

### **4. Misuse of Geographic and Linguistic References**

- o The petition uses the Spanish name "Tecolote" to refer to Toro Creek, despite over 30 years of documented evidence identifying three distinct pre-contact Salinan names for the area. Which in my opinion should be cited. Tecolote is the Spanish name for Owl and is not a Salinan name. The legacy of my father and grandfather, Adrian Dutch Pierce, does not recognize "Tecolote" as the proper name for the region.

### **5. Omission of Key Genealogical Data**

- o The genealogy presented does not reflect the entirety of the Salinan community. In several instances, only married names are used without reference to tribal surnames, leading to an incomplete and misleading representation of ancestral lineage.

## **A Call for Responsible Stewardship**

For decades, the Xolon Salinan and *Tro'trawal* Salinan have attempted reconciliation with the SLO group, but these efforts have not yielded meaningful collaboration. It is not my intent to harm the SLO community or its members. Instead, I seek to protect the integrity of our shared history and ensure that any federal acknowledgement effort accurately reflects our collective Salinan history and heritage.


The Salinan Nation is not defined by fragmented entities but by the strength of our collective communities. Historically, our people lived in villages and districts, coming together to address matters of importance. It is my sincere hope that all Salinan groups can work in unison, not in isolation, to honor and preserve our cultural heritage.

I appreciate your time and consideration of these concerns. I welcome further discussion to ensure that the federal recognition process upholds the highest standards of historical and cultural accuracy.

Sincerely, 



**Penny Pierce Hurt**  
President, Sacred Arrow Society Church, Inc.  
Elder & Cultural Preservation Administrator  
Council Member, Xolon Salinan Tribe







Penny Pierce Hurt [REDACTED]

## Tenneco lawsuit

7 messages

Penny Pierce Hurt [REDACTED]  
To: Michael Erin Woody [REDACTED]

Sun, Nov 27, 2022 at 2:04 AM

Michael,

I will be sending a letter to you and your council stating that you "are not" to use any of the documents with my father's name on them. Sacred Arrow was formed in 1979, every battle he participated in was through and financed by Sacred Arrow. Before your council existed the continuity of all his cultural battles was passed to the Xolon Salinan People by my father. If you persist in using our documents, I will contest through the BIA your use of any Sacred Arrow Documents. In the early 1990's the authority to use these documents was passed to my People the Xolon Salinan.

The only reason my father was on your rolls was not for the reason you all may believe. That is between me and my father. He supported everything I have ever done in Indian Country. And together with my family and the Xolon Salinan and the Trowt'raahl Salinan we carry on with my Father's work. I will present copies of these communications to the BIA. My father believed in the integrity of our family story. I have been passed this tradition. You have taken from books my family photos and I respectfully ask you to remove our private photos of Grandpa, Dutch Pierce and Grandma Antonia, from your website. I will be contacting the appropriate agencies that own the rights of these photos. You stated they were from the Pierce Family archives. They were from a book I contributed to.

Everything about your endeavor has been taking information from others and using it as your own, and it's not. If you have integrity, as a people, return all the documents that belong to our People that were stolen. The 740+ enrollment files belong to the Xolon Salinan. At very least they should have stayed with the non-profit.

Monies were borrowed from my father and never paid back, do you feel that will happen?

I will fight for what is right, my Father and Grandpa and Uncle Les did, so will I, make no mistake.

Penny Pierce Hurt, Elder

Xolon Salinan Tribe