

**NATIVE AMERICAN HERITAGE COMMISSION**

915 CAPITOL MALL, ROOM 364  
SACRAMENTO, CA 95814  
(916) 653-4082  
Fax (916) 657-5390  
Web Site [www.nahc.ca.gov](http://www.nahc.ca.gov)

March 24, 2005

Mr. Jim Cason  
Acting Assistant Secretary  
Bureau of Indian Affairs  
1849 C Street NW  
MS 4141  
Washington, D.C. 20240

Dear Mr. Cason:

The California Native American Heritage Commission would like to express support for restoration of the Winnemem Wintu Tribe's status as a federally recognized Native American tribe. The Winnemem Wintu tribe has a long history of interaction with the federal government, beginning with its signing of the unratified Cottonwood Treaty of 1851. The tribe was later awarded allotments under the Cleveland Administration and in 1914 won the support of Interior Department officials for a proposal to provide reservation lands.

Since 1941 the Winnemem Wintu Tribe has held title to a Federal Indian Cemetery as well as a 42-acre tract of former allotment land that the tribes wishes to have converted into trust status. Winnemem leaders assert that many members of the tribe need housing and have been unable to secure loans because the land remains in fee status. The tribe believes that its loss of federal recognition caused by a mistake and alleges that due to a this error, members been unable to obtain educational grants, health services and other federal programs specifically available to "federally recognized" tribal groups.

The Winnemem Wintu Tribe has actively participated in the continuation of Winnemem traditions and in cultural resource protection throughout their tribal lands. The tribe has assisted the Native American Heritage Commission on many traditional cultural resource preservation issues such as the Shasta Dam, the Sacred Lands Conference, and California Senate Bill 18 (Sacred Lands Protection).

We would appreciate your prompt attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

Larry Myers  
Executive Secretary

cc: Senator Barbara Boxer  
Senator Dianne Feinstein  
Senator John McCain  
Congressman Wally Herger