

Petition To Amend

Timber Management For Confederated Tribes Of Siletz

February 21-22, 1987
Tribal Council Meeting

I have a concern for the many, many Siletz Indians who are not considered Siletz Indians at all simply because they do not possess 1/8 degree Siletz Indian blood quantum. I am deeply concerned for future generations of our tribe. You may be interested to know that 43% (790) of our current enrolled tribal members possess less than 1/4 degree Indian blood. What makes that quite interesting is that if they do not marry an Indian spouse, two generations will result in less than 1/8. That is internal, self imposed, genocide. We won't need the white man to eliminate us, we'll eliminate ourselves.

I believe that our future generations deserve a chance to belong. I believe that identity and belonging, for those who are not enrolled members, is paramount to any "services" they may obtain as a result of becoming an enrolled, recognized, member of the Confederated Tribes of Siletz. There are numerous instances of split families. The father or mother or both, are enrolled members but the children are not, simply because of a specific blood quantum. I believe our ancestors paid for and earned all of us the right to belong to the tribe. The white man didn't verify their blood quantum when they brought them to Siletz. They were marched here or brought by ship because they were Indian. Their descendants are still Indian.

Bonnie Peterson, Kristi Martin, Shirley Strickler, Sherry Eddings, and Tina Jones have volunteered to assist in obtaining the required signatures on the petition. Below is a copy of the petition. If you have any questions regarding the petition I would be happy to discuss them with you. If you would like to help in your area please call me 1-800-922-9399 (work) 563-2739 (home).

Phil Rilatos, Sr.
Tribal Member Roll #784

The Constitution

A PETITION TO AMEND
THE CONSTITUTION OF THE CONFEDERATED
TRIBES OF SILETZ INDIANS OF OREGON

The purpose of this petition is to have a General Council election on a measure to change constitutional requirements for tribal enrollment.

This petition would amend Article I, Section 1, (B) to read:

(B) Who possess Siletz blood quantum as direct descendants, have filed an application for enrollment with the appropriate tribal body and have been accepted as members in accordance with the tribal ordinance adopted under Article I, Section 2 of this Constitution.

THE PURPOSE OF THIS PETITION IS TO HAVE A GENERAL COUNCIL ELECTION ON THE FOLLOWING MEASURE:

A Measure To Change Constitutional
Requirements For Tribal Enrollment

Presently the Siletz Tribal Constitution requires that applicants "... possess one-eighth or more degree Siletz blood quantum ..." to be eligible for enrollment. This proposed measure would eliminate the specific blood degree requirement and replace it with a direct descendancy requirement. If this measure is passed, applicants possessing blood degree from a direct tribal descendant (i.e. mother, father, grandmother, grandfather, etc.) would be eligible for enrollment.

Motion #3 approved acceptance of the Concept Paper and Outline of Concept for Transfer of Land to Siletz Tribe.

PRIVATIZATION MODEL FOR TIMBER MANAGEMENT
FOR THE CONFEDERATED TRIBES OF SILETZ
INDIANS OF OREGON

The principal goal of the Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians of Oregon is "economic self-sufficiency." In contrast to many Indian tribal governments taht commonly emphasize federal block grant and welfare programs in their interpretations of economic self-sufficiency, the Siletz emphasize their own physical and human resource capabilities and the health of the economy in general. The Siletz, in this sense, view their future relationship with the federal government in much the same way that many state and local governments now are inclined to do.

The Siletz Tribal Council's specific interpretation of economic self-sufficiency is the ability of the Tribe: (1) to finance cultural, social and political activities necessary to preserve tribal identity and sovereignty, and (2) to promote economic growth and development, both on, and adjacent to, the Siletz reservation, such that employment opportunities can be expanded for members of the Siletz Tribe.

The Siletz, just as many other Indian tribes, are burdened with chronic unemployment problems more serious than those afflicting the general population. Economic self-sufficiency requires that this disparity be reduced and, if possible, eliminated. Increased economic opportunities for the Siletz, it also should be noted, increase economic incentives and opportunities for others and, therefore, is beneficial to non-Indians in the local and regional economy.

The Siletz Tribal Council firmly believes that it can achieve its goal, providing that two conditions can be met. First, the resource base that the Tribe now has must be increased. The existing Siletz reservation consists of approximately 3,600 acres in 36 scattered parcels in western Lincoln County, Oregon. Most of this land is timbered. Timber income currently is an important source of tribal income and is expected to continue to be in the future.

The Siletz have been advised by resource economists, however, that this existing land base is not sufficient to sustain a level of income necessary to achieve the Tribe's self-sufficiency goal. An economically viable tree farm requires more than 3,600 acres.

The Siletz, therefore, are planning to ask Congress to transfer the remaining 12,000 acres of public domain lands in Lincoln County to the existing Siletz Reservation. This land, which currently is managed by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), consists of scattered parcels and mostly is timbered. With a 15,000 acre timberland base, the Siletz would be able to generate sufficient income to achieve their economic self-sufficiency goal.

The second condition that needs to be met is that the Siletz be permitted to manage the land so that the full economic potential of the resources can be realized. Existing constraints on the management of these lands by the BLM, especially those that apply to the scheduling and marketing of timber harvests, are preventing full economic potential from being realized. The difference in income that could be generated under the proposed Siletz management plan set forth below and that which could be expected to be generated under existing management is the source of the additional income that the Tribe must have to achieve their self-sufficiency goal.

The means by which the Siletz Tribe is considering to generate additional income from the 12,000 acres of timber resources would be innovative in terms of existing Indian land tenure. Under the proposed arrangement, transferred land would be held in trust by the United States for the Tribe but the timber resources on the land would be managed by a private corporation. the initial distribution of stock in the latter corporation would be to members of the Siletz Tribe but shares of stock would be transferrable. This arrangement would allow reliance on the incentive system of private enterprise to achieve the Tribe's goal.

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Date of Certification: _____
Sponsor's Name: Phil Rilatos, Sr.
Sponsor's Address: 3591 Hwy. 34, Waldport, OR 97394
Sponsor's Phone Number: (503) 563-2739