



PACIFIC FOREST TRUST
Private Forests. Public Treasures.

May 2, 2022

Department of the Interior
Office of the Assistant Secretary – Indian Affairs
Attn: Office of Federal Acknowledgement
1849 E Street, NW
MS-4071 MIB
Washington, DC 20240

Re: Petition #82 – Southern Sierra Miwuk Nation

Dear Assistant Secretary:

The Pacific Forest Trust (PFT) is writing to express support for the Southern Sierra Miwuk Nation's Petition for Federal Acknowledgement. PFT is a non-profit organization and nationally accredited land trust dedicated to the conservation of our nation's forests for their multiple public benefits, working in partnership with landowners, government agencies, tribes and local communities. PFT owns approximately 900 acres of land within the traditional territory of the Southern Sierra Miwuk Nation (SSMN), situated adjacent to Yosemite National Park (Park). We are impressed with the work SSMN has been doing to sustain its cultural heritage and to educate visitors to the Park. SSMN, and its representative, the non-profit American Indian Council of Mariposa County, clearly functions as a "modern and distinct" tribal entity working with many others throughout the region while drawing on their relationship to these lands since time immemorial. PFT's work benefits from the knowledge and practices of SSMN as well as other tribes within whose territory we operate.

Having reviewed the history and record of the Proposed Finding, we feel it does not accurately reflect the status of the SSMN. The basis of the Assistant Secretary for Indian Affairs' (AS-IA) Proposed Finding was quite limited, especially its evaluation of only one of the seven mandatory criteria; and its limited time review in spite of the requirement that the evaluation consider "from historical times until the present."

We strongly urge the AS-IA withdraw the deficient Proposed Finding and reinstitute the full and proper process of consideration of the SSMN's petition.

Thank you for your timely attention to this request.

Very truly yours,

Laurie A. Wayburn
President