

long-term management of *G. Caespitosa*.
 (2) Inventory potential habitat for additional occurrences of the species.
 (3) Identify and establish management guidelines which will ensure overall long term survivability of the species.

Public Comments Solicited

The Fish and Wildlife Service will use information received during the public comment period in its determination as to whether it should be a signatory party to the agreements.

Comments or suggestions from the public, other concerned governmental agencies, the scientific community, industry, or any other interested party concerning the draft documents are hereby solicited. All comments and materials received will be considered prior to the approval of any final document.

Author: The primary author of this notice is John L. England (see ADDRESSES section) (telephone 801/524-5001).

Authority: The authority for this action is the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended (16 U.S.C. 1531 *et seq.*)

Dated: August 15, 1997.

Elliott N. Sutta,

Acting Regional Director, Denver, Colorado.

[FR. 97-22312 Filed 8-21-97; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4310-55-M

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Bureau of Indian Affairs

Receipt of Petition for Federal Acknowledgment of Existence as an Indian Tribe

AGENCY: Bureau of Indian Affairs, Interior.

ACTION: Notice.

This is published in the exercise of authority delegated by the Secretary of the Interior to the Assistant Secretary—Indian Affairs by 209 DM 8.

Pursuant to 25 CFR 83.9(a) notice is hereby given that the Chilkoot Kaagwaantaan Clan, P.O. Box 275, Haines, Alaska 99827 has filed a petition for acknowledgment by the Secretary of the Interior that the group exists as an Indian tribe. The petition was received by the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) on April 22, 1997, and was signed by members of the group's governing body.

This is a notice of receipt of petition and does not constitute notice that the petition is under active consideration. Notice of active consideration will be sent by mail to the petitioner and interested parties at the appropriate time.

Under Section 83.9(a) of the Federal regulations, parties may submit factual and/or legal arguments in support of or in opposition to the group's petition. Any information submitted will be made available on the same basis as other information in the BIA's files. Third parties are required to submit copies of their comments directly to the petitioner. The petitioner will be provided an opportunity to respond to such submissions prior to a final determination regarding the petitioner's status.

The petition may be examined, by appointment, in the Department of the Interior, Bureau of Indian Affairs, Branch of Acknowledgment and Research, Room 3427-MIB, 1849 C Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20240, Phone: (202) 208-3592.

Dated: July 31, 1997.

Hilda Manuel,

Deputy Commissioner of Indian Affairs.

[FR Doc. 97-22297 Filed 8-21-97; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Bureau of Indian Affairs

Proposed Finding Against Federal Acknowledgment of the Chinook Indian Tribe

AGENCY: Bureau of Indian Affairs, Interior.

ACTION: Notice of proposed finding.

SUMMARY: Pursuant to 25 CFR 83.9(f), notice is hereby given that the Assistant Secretary—Indian Affairs (Assistant Secretary) proposes to decline to acknowledge that the Chinook Indian Tribe, Inc., P.O. Box 228, Chinook, WA 98614, exists as an Indian tribe within the meaning of Federal law. This notice is based on a determination that the group does not satisfy three of the seven criteria set forth in 25 CFR 83.7, and therefore does not meet the requirements for a government-to-government relationship with the United States.

DATES: As provided by 25 CFR 83.9(g), any individual or organization wishing to comment on this proposed finding may submit arguments and evidence to support or rebut the evidence relied upon. This material must be submitted on or before December 22, 1997. Interested parties who submit arguments and evidence to the Assistant Secretary should provide copies of their submissions to the petitioner as well.

ADDRESSES: Comments on the proposed finding and/or requests for a copy of the report of evidence should be addressed

to the Office of the Assistant Secretary, Bureau of Indian Affairs, 1849 C Street NW, Washington, DC, 20240, Attention: Branch of Acknowledgment and Research, Mailstop 4603-MIB.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Holly Reckord, Chief, Branch of Acknowledgment and Research, (202) 208-3592.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: This notice is published in the exercise of authority delegated by the Secretary of the Interior to the Assistant Secretary by 209 DM 8. The Chinook Indian Tribe's petition was under active consideration at the time that the revised regulations became effective on March 28, 1994. The petitioner was given the choice under 25 CFR 83.5(f) of the revised regulations of being evaluated under the 1994 revised regulations or the regulations that were published on September 5, 1978. The Chinook Indian Tribe, by letter dated April 21, 1994, requested that the BIA continue to evaluate its petition under the 1978 regulations. Therefore, all references to 25 CFR part 83 in this notice will refer to the 1978 regulations.

The Chinook Indian Tribe petitioner consists primarily of descendants of the historical Lower Band of Chinook Indians. While most of the petitioner's members can trace their ancestry back to the Lower Band of Chinook, the petitioner has not existed as a tribal entity continuously since the time of first sustained contact in 1811 between the historical Lower Band of Chinook and non-Indians. The petitioner's ancestors were identified as an Indian entity by external sources from 1792 to at least 1855. The available evidence indicates that the petitioner, as a whole, has not formed a distinct social or geographical community since 1880. The evidence also demonstrates that the petitioner has not exercised political authority over its members since 1855.

Of the seven mandatory criteria for Federal acknowledgment as an Indian tribe, the petitioner has met criteria (d), (e), (f), and (g), but has failed to meet criteria (a), (b), and (c).

At the time of first sustained contact with non-Indians, the historical Lower Band of Chinook was described as living in villages along the north shore of the Columbia River where it empties into the Pacific Ocean. There were also Lower Chinook villages along the tributaries that fed into the Columbia River and into Shoalwater Bay. Three other bands of Chinookan-speaking Indians lived in proximity to the Lower Band of Chinook: the Wahkiakum, the Kathlamet, and the Clatsop. Federal negotiators signed treaties with each of