

establishment of the Chaubunagungamaug reservation in the 1680's, the historical Chaubunagungamaug Band, as a portion of the historical Nipmuc tribe, meets criterion 83.7(c) during this time on the basis of precedent. From the late 17th century through 1870, direct evidence of political leadership provided by petitions and similar documents is sparse, but in the context of the existence of a reservation upon which the majority (over 50%) of the Chaubunagungamaug, or Dudley/Webster, Indians resided, the historical Chaubunagungamaug Band meets 83.7(c) from the 1680's through 1870 by carryover from criterion 83.7(b)(2). From 1870 through 1891, the only evidence of political influence or authority is provided by the group's hiring of a lawyer and pursuit of a suit against the State of Massachusetts, which is insufficient under the regulations. From 1891 through 1976, there is no documentary evidence of continuing formal or informal political influence or organization within the petitioner's antecedent group, whether that group be defined as the Dudley/Webster descendants as a whole, or limited to the direct ancestors of the current members of petitioner #69B. For 1977–1980, there is limited evidence that the leaders of the current group began to interact with the Nipmuc group headed by Zara Ciscobrough and centered on the Hassanamisco Reservation in Grafton, Massachusetts, but no evidence that there was political influence or authority within any organization antecedent to petitioner #69B. During the 1980's, there is evidence that an organization with officers existed, but insufficient evidence that this formal organization exercised political influence or authority over its members who were, additionally, at that period, only a portion of the current petitioner. The evidence in the record for the 1990's is not sufficient to conclude that the petitioner meets 83.7(c) for that period. Therefore, the petitioner does not meet criterion 83.7(c).

Criterion 83.7(d) requires that the petitioner provide copies of the group's current governing document. The Webster/Dudley Band of Chaubunagungamaug Nipmuck Indians submitted its constitution and bylaws. Therefore, the petitioner meets criterion 83.7(d).

Criterion 83.7(e) states that the petitioner's membership must consist of individuals who descend from a historical Indian tribe or from historical Indian tribes which combined and functioned as a single autonomous political entity. Of the members of #69B,

185 of 212 (87%) descend from the historical Dudley/Webster, or Chaubunagungamaug, reservation and meet the petitioner's own membership requirements. Eighty-seven percent of members showing descent from the historical tribe is within precedents for meeting criterion 83.7(e). Therefore, the petitioner meets criterion 83.7(e).

Criterion 83.7(f) states that the petitioner's membership must be composed principally of persons who are not members of any acknowledged North American Indian tribe. No members of the petitioner are known to be enrolled in any federally recognized tribe. Therefore, the petitioner meets criterion 83.7(f).

Criterion 83.7(g) states that neither the petitioner nor its members can have been the subject of congressional legislation that has expressly terminated or forbidden the Federal relationship. There is no evidence that this petitioner has been subject to congressional legislation terminating a Federal relationship. Therefore, the petitioner meets criterion 83.7(g).

Based on this preliminary factual determination, the petitioner known as the Webster/Dudley Band of Chaubunagungamaug Nipmuck Indians should not be granted Federal acknowledgment under 25 CFR part 83.

As provided by 25 CFR 83.10(h) of the regulations, a report summarizing the evidence, reasoning, and analyses that are the basis for the proposed decision will be provided to the petitioner and interested parties, and is available to other parties upon written request.

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—Indian Affairs, Bureau of Indian Affairs, 1849 C Street, NW., Washington, DC 20240, Attention: Branch of Acknowledgment and Research, MailStop 4660–MIB. Comments on the proposed finding should be submitted within 180 calendar days from the date of publication of this notice. The period for comment on a proposed finding may be extended for up to an additional 180 days at the AS–IA's discretion upon a finding of good cause (83.10(i)). Comments by interested and informed parties must be provided to the petitioner as well as to the Federal Government (83.10(h)). After the close of the 180-day comment period, and any extensions, the petitioner has 60 calendar days to respond to third-party comments (83.10(k)). This period may be extended at the AS–IA's discretion if warranted by the extent and nature of the comments.

After the expiration of the comment and response periods described above, the BIA will consult with the petitioner concerning establishment of a time frame for preparation of the final determination. After consideration of the written arguments and evidence rebutting the proposed finding and within 60 days after beginning preparation of the final determination, the Assistant Secretary—Indian Affairs will publish the final determination of the petitioner's status in the **Federal Register** as provided in 25 CFR 83.10(1).

Dated: September 25, 2001.

Neal A. McCaleb,

Assistant Secretary—Indian Affairs.

[FR Doc. 01–24512 Filed 9–26–01; 3:31 pm]

BILLING CODE 4310–02–P

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Bureau of Land Management

[OR–027–1220–DG; G 1–0314]

Meeting Notice

AGENCY: Bureau of Land Management (BLM), Burns District.

ACTION: Meeting Notice for the Steens Mountain Advisory Council.

SUMMARY: The Steens Mountain Advisory Council (SMAC) will meet at the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), Burns District Office, HC 74–12533 Hwy 20 West, Hines, Oregon 97738, 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., local time, on October 22, 2001, and 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., local time, on October 23, 2001. The SMAC was appointed by the Secretary of Interior on August 14, 2001, pursuant to the Steens Mountain Cooperative Management and Protection Act of 2000 (Act). The SMAC's purpose is to provide representative counsel and advice to the BLM regarding (1) new and unique approaches to management of the land within the bounds of the Steens Mountain Cooperative Management and Protection Area (CMPA), (2) cooperative programs and incentives for landscape management that meet human needs, maintain and improve the ecological and economic integrity of the area, and (3) preparation and implementation of a management plan for the CMPA. This will be the first meeting of the SMAC. Topics to be discussed by the SMAC include operating procedures, establishing meeting guides, Charter, roles and responsibilities, Federal Advisory Committee Act/Management, selection of a chairperson, Federal travel regulations, forming of subcommittees, facilitation needs, actions taken by BLM to implement the Act, Resource

Management Plan/Environmental Impact Statement contracting and planning process, Steens Mountain Cooperative Management and Protection Act of 2000, future meeting dates and other matters as may reasonably come before the SMAC. The entire meeting is open to the public. Information to be distributed to the SMAC is requested 10 days prior to the start of the SMAC meeting. Public comment is scheduled for 11:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m., local time, on October 22, 2001.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Additional information concerning the SMAC may be obtained from Rhonda Karges, Management Support Specialist, Burns District Office, HC 74-12533 Hwy 20 West, Hines, Oregon 97738, (541) 573-4433, or Rhonda_Karges@or.blm.gov or from the following web site <http://www.or.blm.gov/Steens>.

Dated: September 6, 2001.

Miles R. Brown,

Andrews Resource Area Field Manager.

[FR Doc. 01-24445 Filed 9-28-01; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4310-33-P

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Bureau of Land Management

[OR-022-01-1060-JJ; G 01-0304]

Oregon: Meeting Notice—Use of Helicopters to Gather Wild Horses

AGENCY: Bureau of Land Management (BLM), Interior.

ACTION: Burns District Office: Public meeting to discuss the use of helicopters to gather wild horses in Oregon.

SUMMARY: In accordance with Pub. L. 92-195, this notice sets forth the public meeting date to discuss the use of helicopters for gathering wild horses in Oregon for FY02.

EFFECTIVE DATE: October 17, 2001—2 p.m. to 3 p.m.

ADDRESSES: The meeting will take place at the BLM Burns District Office, HC 74-12533 Hwy 20 West, Hines, Oregon.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Dean O. Bolstad, Wild Horse Management Specialist, Burns District, Bureau of Land Management, HC 74-12533 Hwy 20 West, Hines, Oregon 97738, telephone (541) 573-4492.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Public comments will be accepted concerning the use of helicopters to gather wild horses in eastern Oregon in FY02. The proposed gathering schedule and approximate dates of gathering will be

presented at the meeting. Approximately 800 animals are proposed for removal in Oregon depending on availability of funds.

This meeting is open to the public. Persons interested in making an oral statement at this meeting are asked to notify the District Manager, Burns District Office, HC 74-12533 Hwy 20 West, Hines, Oregon 97738 by September 21, 2001. Written statements must be received by September 25, 2001.

Summary minutes of the meeting will be available for public inspection and duplication within 30 days following the meeting.

Dated: August 30, 2001.

Thomas H. Dyer,

Burns District Manager.

[FR Doc. 01-24446 Filed 9-28-01; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4310-33-P

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Bureau of Land Management

[WY-100-1010-01]

Notice of Emergency Temporary Closure for All Motorized Vehicles on Public Land in the Silver Creek Ridge Area, Sublette County, WY

AGENCY: Bureau of Land Management, Interior.

ACTION: Notice of Temporary Closure.

SUMMARY: In response to a request from the Wyoming Game & Fish Department (WYG&F), a temporary closure to all motorized vehicles, including over-the-snow vehicles will be in effect starting November 19, 2001, through January 31, 2002 for the Silver Creek Ridge. A sign at the second irrigation ditch crossing 1.6 miles east of State Route 353 establishes the point beyond which the temporary closure is in effect. The purpose of this closure is to allow elk to migrate free of motorized disturbance through this area. This will assist the WYG&F in decreasing elk depredation on stored agricultural crops and meet WYG&F management objectives. This temporary closure will allow the WYG&F and BLM to assess whether the road closure was effective in meeting the management objectives and reducing of elk depredation on stored agricultural crops.

EFFECTIVE DATES: This closure will be effective November 19, 2001, through January 31, 2002. This closure will remain in effect unless modified or rescinded by the Authorized Officer, (BLM Pinedale Field Manager).

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Bill Wadsworth, Realty Specialist or Priscilla Mecham, Field Manager, Pinedale Field Office, P.O. Box 768, Pinedale, Wyoming 82941. Telephone (307)-367-5300.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The objective for closure of the Silver Creek Ridge area is to improve the elk management objectives in the area and reduce depredation of stored agricultural crops on adjoining ranches. The WYG&F have been working with adjoining land owners to allow controlled access onto private lands. The adjoining land owners have agreed to allow access onto their private land to hunters only if the temporary closure is placed on the BLM lands. The temporary closure will close most of the Silver Creek Ridge area to all motorized use, including over-the-snow vehicles from November 19, 2001, through January 31, 2002. The WYG&F feels that motorized vehicle use can disrupt the daily activity patterns of the elk thus limiting the harvest. By restricting motorized vehicle use, the elk will move more freely in the Silver Creek Ridge area, and remain undisturbed by motorized vehicles. This closure will also help by reducing resource damage that is caused by motorized vehicle use off-road.

This temporary use closure applies to public lands in Sublette County, Wyoming, located approximately 8 miles east of Boulder, Wyoming. The designation affects all public lands starting at T. 32 N., R. 106 W., Section 24, E¹/₂, Sixth Principle Meridian on the Silver Creek Ridge area. Motorized vehicle use designations apply to all motorized vehicles with the exceptions of: (1) Any fire, military, emergency, or law enforcement vehicle when used for emergency purposes or any combat support vehicle when used for national defense purposes; (2) any vehicle whose use is expressly authorized by the BLM under permit, lease, license, or contract; and (3) any government vehicle on official business.

Authority for closure orders is provided under 43 CFR subpart 8364.1. Violations of this closure are punishable by a fine not to exceed \$1,000 and/or imprisonment not to exceed 12 months.

Dated: September 7, 2001.

Eldon L. Allison, Jr.,

Acting Pinedale Field Manager.

[FR Doc. 01-24447 Filed 9-28-01; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4310-JB-P