

June 26, 2012

David A. Schwarz  
Little Hoover Commission  
925 L Street Suite 805  
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Honorable David A. Schwarz and Commission members,

I am Anthony Burris the Chairperson of the Ione Band of Miwok Indians Cultural Committee. I am submitting this statement on behalf of our tribe regarding the preservation of cultural sites and resources within the state parks system. Ancestors of the Ione Band of Miwok Indians have resided in numerous regions of California since time immemorial, including the Sierra Nevada mountains and foothills and all the way east to the San Francisco East bay region. As a tribe, the Ione Band of Miwok Indians have had government to government relations with the United States of America since the early part of the twentieth century. We have had our status as a federally recognized tribe restored since 1994. Since having our status restored we have worked with federal, state and local agencies to protect and preserve our cultural places and resources which are of great importance to the members of the Ione Band of Miwok Indians.

Many of the properties within the California State parks system are located within the traditional territories of the Ione band of Miwok Indians. A perfect example of this would be Indian Grinding Rock State Park in Amador county. This park, which we call Chaw'se, is an area rich in cultural heritage, most notably it contains the largest grinding rock in North America containing over 1000 mortar holes. It also has a roundhouse that the Ione Band of Miwok Indians have used for traditional ceremonies since its construction in the early 1970's.

The Little Hoover commission is meeting today to discuss the future disposition of cultural resources within the parks system. The Ione Band of Miwok Indians feel that these areas, some of which may even contain the remains of our people that were interred in grounds that eventually became park property, as well as the cultural resources associated with these areas, be managed in a way that incorporates the ideals and vision of the Ione Band of Miwok Indians. While the Ione Band of Miwok Indians recognizes that inclusion of stewardship over cultural resources may be important to all Indian tribes in California, we can only speak for, and represent, our own tribe.

In looking at the list of slated speakers at today's meeting of the Little Hoover Commission, we noticed that there are no tribal speakers of any native organization or tribe. Preservation and protection of our native places is of the utmost importance to our tribe, which is why we strongly believe our interest in doing so should be included in any recommendations made to the State of California by the Little Hoover Commission. We understand that agencies in general often depend on archaeologists and cultural resource management companies for guidance in these matters, but CRM companies and archaeologists in general cannot represent the unique perspective of tribal people, only the tribes themselves can do so. Not only do CRM companies and tribes have different motivations concerning cultural properties and artifacts, but their understanding of such places and items differ, often drastically. In regards to differing motivation, private CRM firms are businesses and it is a businesses duty to make a profit, which in our view creates an inherent conflict of interest that disables these companies from truly looking after our best interest, no matter how moral or ethical individuals within these companies may be. In regards to our differing backgrounds, the knowledge that archaeologists have is something learned from a book. The knowledge that California Indian tribes have, is something that is part of our living culture and history that has been passed down throughout the generations and cannot be learned in any other manner. Due to these differences in background and understanding, only Native American people can truly represent our interests in all manner of preserving and protecting

these cultural resources. Only Native People can accurately tell our story as it pertains to these places and artifacts. For all of the above reasons, we feel that State Parks has a duty to offer the opportunity and resources to California Indian tribes to manage our own traditional places and artifacts that exist within the state park lands, before these contracts are given to CRM firms. To not include tribes in this process would do a great disservice to the first people of California, which is why we are asking that you include at this time, additional consultation with tribal nations as part of your process, so that your recommendations accurately reflect our voices. In doing so, as far as the management of cultural resources is concerned, you will assisting us in moving from a position of subjugation to one of self determination.

Sincerely,  
Anthony Burris  
Ione Band of Miwok Indians  
Cultural Committee Chairperson

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Anthony Burris', written over the typed name and title.