



Solano County

675 Texas Street
Fairfield, California 94533
www.solanocounty.com

Legislation Text

File #: 20-781, Version: 1

Adopt a resolution recognizing November 2020 as Native American Heritage Month (Supervisor Hannigan)

Published Notice Required? Yes ☐ No ☒
Public Hearing Required? Yes ☐ No ☒

DEPARTMENTAL RECOMMENDATION:

Supervisor Hannigan requests that the Board of Supervisors adopt a resolution recognizing November 2020 as Native American Heritage Month.

SUMMARY:

Native American Heritage Month has been established at the national and state levels with proclamations and celebrations to recognize the diverse cultures, traditions, histories, significant contributions and present day lives of Native Americans. Long before the Spanish and other Euro-Americans arrived in the area today known as Solano County, the area was home to indigenous people known as the Patwin, or Southern Wintun.

FINANCIAL IMPACT:

The costs associated with preparing the agenda item are nominal and absorbed by District 1 FY2020/21 Adopted Budget. The costs associated with preparation and purchase of the resolution materials are included in the Board's FY2020/21 Adopted Budget.

DISCUSSION:

Solano County is named for a Patwin leader, Sina or Sem Yeto, whom Spanish missionaries christened and assigned the Spanish name of "Solano." The earliest historic written records of the Patwin (which literally means "people" in the native tribal language) begin with the Spanish mission explorations and registers, and ethno-historic records show the Patwin inhabited the lower hills of the eastern North Coast Ranges to the Sacramento River, and from Princeton south to the San Pablo and Suisun bays, including the City of Vallejo.

Even though Solano County contains no reservations, the County of Solano enjoys a government-to-government relationship with the closest Patwin tribe, specifically the Yocha Dehe Wintun Nation, whose people live in an area now known as the Capay Valley in adjacent Yolo County, which literally means "home by the spring water."

Yocha Dehe is recognized by the State's Native American Heritage Commission as the Most Likely Descendent of the Patwin people buried in Solano County. The Yocha Dehe Wintun Nation works closely with local governments and agencies throughout the County to protect sacred burial sites from disturbance and desecration.

Yocha Dehe, including its sister Patwin Tribe, Kletsel Dehe Band of Wintun Indians, helped save a controversial waterfront park project in the City of Vallejo's Glen Cove, negotiating a landmark cultural easement that satisfied opponents, while protecting the burial sites and sacred resources contained there, and allowing the Patwin tribes to practice their traditional ceremonies.

Even though the Yocha Dehe people lived in grinding poverty for many decades after being settled on a remote rancheria without sufficient water resources and economic opportunities, the Tribe has a rich history of sharing the fruits of its success with others, having established a philanthropic fund in 2000 that has supported various non-profits and public interest causes within Solano County. In that same spirit, the Tribe renegotiated its gaming compact with the State of California in 2016, securing the right to redirect money that would otherwise go to the State's general fund to, among other recipients, local governments and people in need, including Solano County.

The Tribe has successfully partnered with Solano County to support several health and welfare programs designed to improve the lives of people in its ancestral territory, and the County greatly values its relationship with the Patwin tribe. Solano County honors the history of Yocha Dehe and its sister Patwin tribes, in tribute to all of the people of Patwin descent whose ancestors once resided in Solano County.

ALTERNATIVES:

The Board could choose not to adopt and present this resolution; however, this is not recommended as this is an opportunity to recognize November 2020 as Native American Heritage Month.

OTHER AGENCY INVOLVEMENT:

There is no other agency involvement.

CAO RECOMMENDATION:

APPROVE DEPARTMENTAL RECOMMENDATION