

THE MASHPEE WAMPANOAG TRIBE HAS TAKEN EXTRA PRECAUTIONS FOR THE SAFETY AND WELL BEING OF THE VISITORS AND STAFF

THE MASHPEE WAMPANOAG TRIBE COMMUNITY AND GOVERNMENT CENTER IS NOW UNDER A TEMPORARY CLOSURE, UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE.

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March 27, 2020 (</news/2020/3/27/message-from-the-chairman-we-will-take-action-to-prevent-the-loss-of-our-land>)

Message from the Chairman: We Will Take Action to Prevent the Loss of Our Land

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At 4:00 pm today -- on the very day that the United States has reached a record 100,000 confirmed cases of the coronavirus and our Tribe is desperately struggling with responding to this devastating pandemic -- the Bureau of Indian Affairs informed me that the Secretary of the Interior has ordered that our reservation be disestablished and that our land be taken out of trust. Not since the termination era of the mid-twentieth century has a Secretary taken action to disestablish a reservation.

Today's action was cruel and it was unnecessary. The Secretary is under no court order to take our land out of trust. He is fully aware that litigation to uphold our status as a tribe eligible for the benefits of the Indian Reorganization Act is ongoing.

It begs the question, what is driving our federal trustee's crusade against our reservation?

Regardless of the answer, we the People of the First Light have lived here since before there was a Secretary of the Interior, since before there was a State of Massachusetts, since before the Pilgrims arrived 400 years ago. We have survived, we will continue to survive. These are *our* lands, these are the lands of our ancestors, and these will be the lands of our grandchildren. This Administration has come and it will go. But we will be here, always. And we will not rest until we are treated equally with other federally recognized tribes and the status of our reservation is confirmed.

I will continue to provide updates on this important issue in the coming days as we take action to prevent the loss of our trust status.

Kutâputunumu;

Chairman Cedric Cromwell
Qaqeemasq (Running Bear)

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