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June 14, 2024

PIT RIVER TRIBE OPPOSES RAINBOW GATHERING

The Rainbow Family, who espouse a philosophy of peace, love, and harmony with nature, has been active in their pursuit to scout a portion of public land in an undisclosed location within or near the ancestral lands of the Pit River Tribe. The Rainbow Family, a countercultural movement known for their annual gatherings in the woods, has publicly claimed they do not follow permitting processes established by US Forest Service (USFS) given that no one person can speak for the gatherings. In 2004, the Rainbow Family descended upon the ancestral territory of the Hammawi Band of Pit River, in Modoc County, causing damage to sensitive cultural sites, while blatantly disregarding appointed Pit River delegates who opposed. The Pit River Tribe, in collaboration with USFS, and supported by Modoc County Law Enforcement have expressed concerns that the group's large-scale gatherings, which brings 5,000 or more individuals, poses a number of risks to the landscape, local communities, and strains local budgets in order to provide adequate response. Simple research will find that recent gatherings have not been exempt from harms, including drug abuse, theft, violent crimes (sexual assault, stabbings, child endangerment, etc), and overdose deaths. Risks posed by this gathering are simply entrusted to suggested guidelines for behavior. This event structure creates an environment that enables seedier individuals to thrive, under the guise of peace and goodwill. Despite these concerns, the Rainbow Family has been reluctant to adopt more stringent measures citing their commitment to living in harmony with nature and their distrust of government authorities. The Pit River Tribe opposes the Rainbow Gathering as its benefits do not outweigh the risks posed. As a sovereign nation, we also recognize that our movement towards harmony begins with maintaining our sovereignty, self-determination, and protection of our priceless resources.

Sincerely,

Yatch Bamford,
Tribal Chairman

MADESI