

SANTA YNEZ BAND OF CHUMASH INDIANS

P.O. BOX 517 · SANTA YNEZ · CA · 93460

Tel: 805.688.7997 · Fax: 805.686.9578

www.santaynezechumash.org



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November 28, 2016

Peter Adam, Chairman, Board of Supervisors
Doreen Farr, Member, Board of Supervisors
Ad Hoc Subcommittee Regarding Santa Ynez Chumash Indians Matters
105 East Anapamu Street
Santa Barbara, CA 93101

RE: Your Letter dated Nov. 22, 2016 cancelling meeting for Dec. 8, 2016

Dear Supervisors Farr and Adam:

It is with great disappointment that I received your letter cancelling the December 8, 2016 Ad Hoc Subcommittee meeting on Santa Ynez Band of Chumash Indians matters. This special committee was created as a result of the demands made by Congress on the County from the June 17, 2015 congressional hearing for the purposes of "engaging in discussions between the Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors and members of the Santa Ynez Band of Chumash Indians regarding land use issues, as well as financial matters of mutual concern."

While the Ad Hoc Subcommittee has helped improve the government-to-government relationship, meaningful progress on Camp 4 and other issues have been elusive. As you know, I have participated in each Ad Hoc Subcommittee meeting since its inception in September 2015—first in my capacity as Vice-Chairman and more recently in my capacity as Chairman. I have always hoped that at the end of the day our governments would emerge with a stronger relationship based on mutual trust and respect.

On October 12, 2016, the Tribe delivered a detailed proposal to the County ten (10) days in advance of the scheduled meeting on October 21, 2016. This proposal addressed every issue that has been raised in the "terms and conditions," with substantive responses and significant movement for the Tribe to reach an agreement. Even though both County committee representatives declined to substantively respond to the Tribe's proposal, the tone of the meeting was upbeat and positive with both Supervisor Farr and Supervisor Adam recognizing that the new Chumash proposal included meaningful concessions to the County.

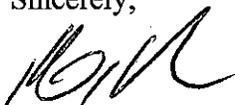
With your inability to find a meeting date in November and now, with the cancellation of the December 8th meeting, I question my optimism that absent Congressional legislation, the County has no interest in negotiating with the Tribe.

One could reasonably interpret the decision to unilaterally pause negotiations—for the second time in 2016—as a political calculation and an effort to delay progress. That interpretation would be supported by the fact that the County has known there would be a transition in its District Three negotiating team for more than a year, since October 9, 2015. The hiatus also seems incongruent with the promise Supervisor Farr made to voters that she and her staff, “will continue to work as hard as we ever have to represent your interests in all the decisions that the Board of Supervisors makes until the very last day of my term in December 2016.” In any event, it is disheartening to realize that another year will come and go without tangible progress on the issue of Camp 4.

As has been the case since 2012, Santa Barbara County will begin the New Year with a concrete set of proposals from the Chumash tribe on Camp 4. These mitigations are not required by law—they simply represent a good faith effort by our tribe to do what’s right. I value the noticeable de-escalation of tension between our communities in 2016--it represents a step forward, and while we look forward to the transition of leadership after the November 8, 2016 election, when the Ad Hoc Subcommittee resumes in January, it is my hope that the County’s elected leaders reciprocate our good faith. This means giving our proposals sincere consideration backed with the decision and action, and doing the work that the Ad Hoc Subcommittee was formed to do.

As I mentioned earlier, please know that I do value the noticeable de-escalation of tension between our communities in 2016. While not substantive, it does represent a big step forward. Please know that our community remains committed to building on this development and turning it into even more progress next year.

Sincerely,



Kenneth Kahn,
Tribal Chairman

CC:

Members of the Board of Supervisors

Congressman Rob Bishop, Chairman, House Committee on Natural Resources

Congressman Raul Grijalva, Ranking Member, House Committee on Natural Resources

Congressman Don Young, Chairman, Subcommittee on Indian, Insular and Alaska Native Affairs

Congressman Raul Ruiz, Ranking Member, Subcommittee on Indian, Insular and Alaska Native Affairs

Congresswoman Lois Capps, California 24th Congressional District