

May 31, 2009

David Randall
Planning Department
City of Madera
205 W. Fourth Street
Madera, Ca. 93637

Dear Mr. Randall,

I am writing regarding an article included in the Draft review copy of the proposed City of Madera General Plan. The article begins on Page 10-5 and ends on Page 10-6, and is located in the Historic and Cultural Resources Element chapter. This article was submitted by the North Fork Rancheria of Mono Indians. I do not believe that this article, written by the North Fork Rancheria of Mono Indians to reflect "the perspective of native peoples on the history of the Madera area", should appear in the proposed General Plan of Madera.

The North Fork Rancheria of Mono Indians is currently involved in an intense lobbying effort to establish a casino north of the City of Madera. The establishment of a casino at the proposed location has been extremely controversial in regards to placing the casino on land that is far removed from the Rancheria and land that must be put into trust by the United States Government. The clear intent of this article is to make a case for the historical presence of the North Fork Mono Indians on the land they wish build a casino on, and to support that claim by stating that the City of Madera supports that claim by including the subject article as part of the approved General Plan. The proposed The City of Madera clearly needs to remain neutral and remove this article from the proposed general for the following reasons:

- The "perspective of native peoples on the history of the Madera area" only reflects the views of the North Fork Mono Indians. This quote from the article implies that this is "the" perspective of native peoples, which would consist of other native peoples other than the North Fork Mono Indians. However, this article is wholly focused on the North Fork tribe and does not include the Chukchansi or other native peoples groups from the County of Madera. The general plan of the City of Madera needs to be balanced and include the perspective of other native people groups of Madera County, or the article needs to be removed completely. The inclusion of this article in the general plan allows the North Fork Mono Indians an opportunity to present a highly biased, inaccurate, and narrow perspective of native peoples in the County of Madera.

- The historical text included by the City of Madera and the consultants, obtained from the historical record, only includes information regarding the Yokut people. There is no mention of the North Fork Mono Indians living in Madera. Let us not allow revisionist history enter our general plan for the sake of commercial ventures and special interests.
- The debate over whether or not the North Fork Mono Indians can establish a casino near Madera rests significantly on the establishment of their rights to placing land into trust due to historical occupation. This issue has been argued in numerous public settings, articles, and among academia. Unless the City of Madera is prepared to spend time and resources in a critical analysis of native people occupation of lands in and around Madera, then the general plan approved by the City of Madera must not include information that is from a biased source.
- The proposed City of Madera general plan, by including the article written by the North Fork Mono Indians cheapens the end product by allowing the general plan to be used for narrow commercial purposes. However, if a decision is made to include the North Fork advertisement, we must allow other groups to make contributions for the sake of consistency. For instance, developers should be allowed to submit articles regarding planning and development from their own viewpoints. Environmental groups from all perspectives should be allowed to have their viewpoints published, regardless of content sanity.

I could go on but I believe that my point has been expressed. Let us stick to the historical facts that are available to us, recognize special interest groups and their ultimate intentions, and focus on the baseline, foundational focus that the proposed general plan should be communicating. The inclusion of special interest propaganda through heavy pressure in the proposed general plan only compromises the integrity of a document that has otherwise been well conceived through hard work and diligence on the part of Citizens of Madera as well as City of Madera staff. By the way, does anyone really believe that this article would have been submitted by the North Fork Mono Indians unless there was a casino potentially at stake?

Sincerely,

Robert Poythress
3125 Forest Ct.
Madera, Ca. 93637