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Rancheria Act of 1958, Pub. Law 85-671, 72 Stat. 619 ("Rancheria Act").

- 2. Under the Rancheria Act the United States purported to terminate the existence of 41 California Indian tribes, distributing tribal property to individual tribe members ("distributees") and abolishing federal programs available to them as a result of their special status. Upon distribution of tribal property, the tribes ceased to be recognized by the federal government and Tribal members were stripped of their special status as Indians. Tribal lands, which had been held in trust and exempted from state taxation and regulatory laws, were transformed into parcels held in fee simple by the distributees. These lands thus became subject to state and local laws.
- 3. Acting under color of authority conferred by the Rancheria Act, the United States took these actions even though it failed to obtain the consent of the requisite number of tribal members, despite having knowledge of their existence and whereabouts. In addition, the United States failed to distribute the tribal property to all distributees as required by law. Finally, the United States failed to discharge its statutory obligations owed to Indian people of the Nevada City Rancheria prior to the distribution of Nevada City Rancheria Assets, as more fully set forth below.
- 4. The Tribe seeks an order compelling the Defendants KEN SALAZAR, in his official capacity as Secretary of the Interior, and LARRY ECHO HAWK, in his official capacity as Assistant Secretary for Indian Affairs of the United States Department of Interior, (collectively "Defendants") to include the Tribe on the list of Federally Recognized Indians Tribes pursuant to the List Act of 1994, Pub. L. 103-454, 108 Stat. 4791 (codified at 25 U.S.C. § 479a-1(a)). In addition, the Tribe seeks an order directing the Secretary to take into trust such lands owned and designated by the Tribe located within an approximate 25-mile radius of the former site of the rancheria ("Designated Lands"), with such lands to be considered "Indian country" as defined in 18 U.S.C. 1151 and "restored lands" as defined by 25 U.S.C. 2719(b)(l)(B)(iii) or settlement of a "land claim" as defined by 2719(b)(l)(B)(i) as of the date of the wrongful acts set forth herein. Finally, the Tribe seeks a court order declaring that the Tribe is eligible for the protection, services and benefits of the federal government available to Indian

tribes by virtue of their status as tribes.

5. The basis for seeking such orders and other relief is that, when the United States undertook such illegal action, it did so in violation of the California Rancheria Act of 1958, Pub. Law 85-671, 72 Stat. 619, as well as violating the substantive and procedural due process rights of the Tribe and its members to whom the Bureau of Indian Affairs ("BIA") owed a fiduciary obligation.

JURISDICTION

This Court has jurisdiction (a) under 28 U.S.C. § 1331 in that this action arises under the Constitution and laws of the United States; (b) under 28 U.S.C. § 1361 in that Plaintiff seeks to compel offices and employees of the United States and its agencies to perform duties owed to Plaintiff; and (c) under 28 U.S.C. § 1362 in that this is an action brought by an Indian Tribe or band based on claims arising under the Constitution and laws of the United States including U.S. Const. Art. II, § 8, cl. 3 (Indian Commerce Clause), the Rancheria Act, and federal common law. Further, jurisdiction to review agency action is invoked pursuant to the Administrative Procedures Act ("APA"), 5 U.S.C. §§ 702-703. Declaratory relief is sought pursuant to 28 U.S.C. §§ 2201-2202. The United States has waived its and Defendants' sovereign immunity to the claims herein by virtue of (without limitation) the APA, and the United States' fiduciary and trustee obligations owed to the Nevada City Rancheria and its members. Defendants have acted beyond their statutory authority by allowing subordinate officers to violate the laws and Constitution of the United States and thus has no sovereign immunity.

VENUE

7. Venue is appropriate in the San Jose Division of the Northern District of California, pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 1391(e) and (b)(2) because the Secretary resides in this district and a substantial part of the events or omissions giving rise to the Tribe's claims occurred near this district and/or the convenience of the parties and witnesses is best served since venue in this district will reduce travel and other cost. Moreover, venue is appropriate in this district as the related matter of *Hardwick v. United States*, Case No. C79-1710 (N.D. Cal.) ("*Hardwick*")

has been pending in this jurisdiction since 1979.

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PARTIES

- Plaintiff NISENAN MAIDU TRIBE OF THE NEVADA CITY RANCHERIA is 8. a Native American Tribe consisting of Indian members, and descendants and their Indian successors in interest, which the United States recognized the Nevada City Rancheria. The Tribe was a federally recognized Indian Tribe until it was unlawfully terminated on or about September 22, 1964.
- 9. Defendant KEN SALAZAR is the Secretary of the United States Department of Interior ("Secretary") having a mandatory statutory duty to carry out the provisions of the Federally Recognized Indian Tribe List Act of 1994 ("Tribe List Act"). The Secretary is an officer or employee of the United States and is sued in his official capacity only.
- Defendant LARRY ECHO HAWK is the Assistant Secretary for Indian Affairs of 10. the United States Department of Interior and is an officer or employee of the United States and is sued in his official capacity only. The Bureau of Indian Affairs is a subagency within the United States Department of Interior.
- DOE Defendants are officers or employees of the United States and have direct or 11. delegated statutory duties in carrying out the provisions of the Rancheria Act as amended and for fulfilling the trust responsibilities of the United States toward Indian people, including Plaintiff.
- Plaintiff is ignorant of the true names and capacities of Defendants sued herein as 12. DOES 1 through 100, inclusive, and therefore sues these Defendants by these fictitious names. Plaintiff will amend or seek leave of this Court to amend this Complaint when those names and capacities are ascertained.

FACTUAL ALLEGATIONS

Historical Background of the Nevada City Rancheria A.

- The recorded history of the Tribe predates California's Gold Rush Era. 13.
- 14. In the early 1800s there were several thousand tribal members living in the area and residing on a parcel near the former Nevada City Rancheria. They were hunters and gatherers subsisting on large and small game, fish, acorns, bulbs and roots, and wild fruits and

vegetables. In approximately 1859, the Tribe moved to the parcel identified as Nevada City Rancheria.

- 15. In 1887 Chief Charlie, the tribal chief at that time, obtained a 75-acre allotment, identified as Indian Allotment No. 1, Sacramento, Cal., Land District. The property was used and occupied by all Indian of the Tribe within the area. As noted, the Tribe's parcel was known by local residents as "the Campoodie."
- 16. Unlike other Rancherias, in recognition of the government-to-government relationship, President Wilson issued an Executive Order on May 6, 1913 covering the property originally reserved in the 1850's by white settlers to the Tribe. The Presidential order states: "It is hereby ordered the following described land in Nevada County, California, be and the same hereby is, withdrawn from entry sale or other disposition and set aside for the Nevada or Colony tribe of Indians residing near Nevada City," and the 75-acre parcel was so listed.
- 17. As in the past, the United States continued to engage the Tribe on a government-to-government relationship.
- 18. Over the subsequent 45 years the Campoodie was referred to by the Indian Service as the "Indian Colony at Nevada City," "Indian Flat," or "Nevada City Rancheria" while the locals continued to use the term "Campoodie." During that time there were several Indian Service reports of significant numbers of Indians living on the Rancheria although it varied giving seasonal work and responses to economic situations.
- 19. The Indian Reorganization Act of June 18, 1934 ("IRA"), P.L. 73-383, 48 Stat. 988, codified at 25 U.S.C. 477, also known as the Wheeler-Howard Act, among other things, restored to Native Americans the management of their assets and included provisions intended to create a sound economic foundation for the inhabitants of Indian reservations. Section 18 of the IRA conditions application of the IRA on a majority vote of the affected Indian nation or tribe within one year of the effective date of the IRA.
- 20. As with many rancherias, the Tribe voted to organize itself under the IRA, thus continuing the trust relationship with the United States. As a consequence of that vote, the United States and Defendants and/or their predecessors-in-interest were on actual and

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constructive notice of the members of the Tribe from that period forward.

Prior to the admission of California and continuing after the IRA vote, the Tribe 21. operated as an autonomous Indian nation maintaining government-to-government relations with the United States, California and local entities and other Tribes as well as maintaining historical political influence over its members. In addition, the Tribe maintained social interaction among the group, sharing economic activity and benefits and sacred ritual activities as most members resided in the geographic area.

В. Federal Termination Policy and the Rancheria Act

During the 1950's, due to pressure from non-Indians who desired to develop tribal 22. land and resources, the United States pursued a policy of "Termination" in respect to Indian tribes. On August 1, 1953, Congress adopted House Concurrent Resolution 108 ("HCR 108"), H.R. Con. Res. 108, 83rd Cong., 1st Sess., 67 Stat. B132 (1953). Although HCR 108 was merely a general policy statement it set the tone for the federal government's approach to Indian affairs during the 1950's and 1960's. HCR 108 provided:

> Whereas it is the policy of Congress, as rapidly as possible, to make the Indians within territorial limits of the United States subject to the same laws and entitled to the same privileges and responsibilities as are applicable to other citizens of the United States, to end their status as wards of the United States, and to grant them all of the rights and prerogatives pertaining to American citizenship, and

Whereas the Indians within the territorial limits of the United States should assume their full responsibilities as American Citizens: Now, therefore, be it Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate concurring), That it is declared to be the sense of Congress that, at the earliest possible time, all of the Indian tribes and the individual members thereof located within the states of California, Florida, New York and Texas, and all of the following named Indian tribes and individual members thereof, should be freed from Federal supervision and control and from all disabilities and limitations specially applicable to Indians[.]

After Congress passed HCR 108, the United States rapidly pursued the stated termination policy through specific legislative enactments. Tribes strongly opposed termination, however, tribal consent was often not considered necessary to the implementation of the termination policy.

On August 18, 1958, as part of the United States' general termination policy, 23.

Congress enacted the California Rancheria Act ("Rancheria Act"), P.L. 85-671, 72 Stat. 619,
amended by the Act of August 1, 1964, P.L. 88-419, 78 Stat. 390. Section 1 of the Rancheria
Act provided that the assets of 41 named Rancherias (including the Nevada City Rancheria)
"shall be distributed in accordance with the provisions of this Act." Section 2(a) of the
Rancheria Act required that either the Indians of each Rancheria or the Secretary of the United
Stated Department of the Interior, after consultation with the Indians, prepare a distribution plan
for each Rancheria.

- 24. Section 2 of the Rancheria Act provided for a referendum on distribution of rancheria assets with specific procedural protections afforded to individual Tribal members who feel they may be "unfairly treated" but such a distribution.
- 25. Section 3 of the Rancheria Act required the Secretary to undertake certain actions with respect to each Rancheria prior to distributing the land pursuant to the distribution plans and removing them from trust status. Pursuant to Section 3, the Secretary of the Interior was required to, *inter alia*:
 - A. Survey Rancheria boundaries to ensure marketable title to individual parcels (California Rancheria Act § 3(a));
 - B. Bring Indian Bureau roads serving the Rancheria up to comparable standards for similar county-maintained roads (id. § 3(b)); and
 - C. Install or rehabilitate irrigation and domestic water systems as the Secretary of the Interior and Rancheria residents agreed upon (id. § 3(c)).
- 26. Section 8 of the Rancheria Act required that, prior to the termination of a Rancheria, the Secretary of the Interior was to "protect the rights of individual Indians who are minors, non compos mentis, or in the opinion of the Secretary in need of assistance in conduct of their affairs, by causing the appointment of guardians for such Indians in courts of competent jurisdiction, or by such other means as he may deem adequate, without application from such Indians"
- 27. Section 9 of the Rancheria Act required that prior to the termination of a rancheria, the Secretary of the Interior was to implement education and vocational training

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programs for the benefit of the Rancheria Indians.

- Section 11 of the Rancheria Act allowed for revocation of the Tribal constitution 28. or corporate charter only after "a plan is approved by the majority of the adult Indians" of a given Tribe.
- Pursuant to the Rancheria Act, once the Secretary of the Interior had satisfied his 29. duties under Section 3 and after the "plan for distribution of the assets of a Rancheria or reservation" was approved and the distribution plan was final, Section 10(b) of the Rancheria Act provided:

the Indians who receive any part of such assets, and the dependent members of their immediate families who are not members of any other tribe or band of Indians, shall not be entitled to any of the services performed by the United States for Indians because of their status as Indians all restrictions and tax exemptions applicable to trust or restricted land or interests therein owned by them are terminated, all statues of the United States which affect Indians because of their status as Indians shall be inapplicable to them, and the laws of the several States shall apply to them in the same manner as they apply to other citizens or persons within their iurisdiction.

- The Rancheria Act was amended on August 11, 1964. (Pub.L.No. 88-419, 78 30. Stat. 390.) Specifically, Section 3 was amended to direct that the Secretary of Interior was to "construct, improve, install, extend, or otherwise provide, by contract or otherwise . . . irrigation facilities for Indian homes, communities and lands" prior to distributing title to Rancheria lands.
- 31. The 1964 amendments to the Rancheria Act also specified that the Secretary of Health, Education, and Welfare was to "construct, improve, install, extend or otherwise provide . . . sanitation facilities (including domestic and community water supplies and facilities, drainage facilities, and sewage and waste disposal facilities, together with necessary appurtenances and fixtures) . . . in accordance with the provisions of section 7 of the Act of August 4, 1954 (58 Stat. 674), as amended (42 U.S.C. 2004a)."

Ultra Vires Termination of Plaintiff Nevada City Rancheria C.

In the case of the Nevada City Rancheria and its members, none of the substantive 32. actions required under the Rancheria Act were undertaken by the United States or Defendants or their subordinates in the BIA as regards the Nevada City Rancheria or its Tribal members.

- disposing of the property pursuant to the Rancheria Act. Historical documentation demonstrates that, rather than consult with the several Indians living in the vicinity who were actually known from the IRA vote and implicated by the Rancheria Act, the BIA spoke only to the Rancheria occupants at that time, Peter and Margaret Johnson. Neither was represented by legal counsel. Both were in their later years and both acquiesced to Defendants' plan of distribution that they should receive any benefits of sale of the Rancheria. However, at this time neither Mr. nor Mrs. Johnson was the Rancheria's tribal leader. The Tribe's Chief was Louis Kelly. Louis Kelly lived less than a mile away from the Johnsons and his home could be seen from the Rancheria. In similar fashion the BIA also turned a blind eye to the several other Rancheria members living in the area.
- 34. BIA records demonstrate that BIA officials knew Chief Kelly was the leader of the tribe. For example, BIA correspondence from two years prior evidenced this fact. Further, one of the termination worksheets used to identify distributees mentioned that Chief Kelly was an assignment holder to the Rancheria.
- 35. Despite having this knowledge and the records of the members voting under the IRA, as well as owing a fiduciary obligation to the Tribe, the BIA did not consult with Chief Kelly or any of the other Tribal members. Consultation was required by the BIA to carry out the terms of the Rancheria Act and fulfilling the fiduciary obligation owed to the Tribe and its members.
- 36. The BIA did not consult with any other tribal members known to live in the vicinity. For example, BIA records indicate that Frank and Quila Jones sought and received an assignment of land on the Rancheria from Peter Johnson just a few years before, but BIA never contacted the Joneses regarding disposition. Neither did BIA contact the Yemie family who were documented Tribal members living in the area. Tragically, the BIA did not even consult the Johnsons' own living descendants who could have, at the very least, benefitted from the educational training required by the Rancheria Act.
 - 37. The BIA's failure to contact any Tribal members other than the Johnsons before

disposing of the Rancheria property violated the fiduciary duty owed to the Tribe as evidenced by the BIA's actions in the termination of other rancherias. For example, in the case of other Rancherias the BIA engaged in substantial outreach both on and off the Rancheria to ensure that any termination took place with due process protections in place. Particular attention was paid to ensuring participation by all those having an interest in the Rancheria:

At each of the meetings Public Law 85-671 was discussed entirely, section by section. Generally speaking, the Indians concerned were very anxious to receive title to the lands they are occupying. It was explained that we wanted them to make their own plans and to include in the plan those people whom they thought had rights on their Rancheria. We found that there were different situations that called for different conclusions and it would be hard to issue a regulation governing membership. It is our hope, and we tried to explain this to each group, that they will not exclude anyone who has a right on the Rancheria.

Progress Report No. 4 - Public Law 85-671 (September 26, 1958).

- 38. However, when undertaking the termination of the Nevada City Rancheria, the BIA failed to follow its own advice or policies, procedures and practices. In addition, the BIA failed to research and consult Tribal members regarding voting and, ultimately, distribution of tribal assets. When put on notice of its failure to follow constitutional and statutory requirements, the BIA nonetheless rejected participation by anyone not found to be residing on the Rancheria proper at that time including the tribal Chief Louis Kelly. In short, the BIA took advantage of the Johnsons to the detriment of the Johnsons and all members and other beneficiaries of the Nevada City Rancheria.
- 39. These failures by the BIA are unlike the safeguarding actions it undertook to protect tribal members of other terminated rancherias. By failing to honor its statutory obligations to the Nevada City Rancheria, Defendants through the BIA avoided the cost of provide infrastructure and the like through the simple expedient of reaching a deal with Mr. Johnson, who, according to public information contained within press clippings at the time, never wanted to leave the Rancheria in the first place. The BIA's Approved Distribution Plan demonstrates the cost-avoidance result as it included only Peter and Margaret Johnson as distributees. Defendants avoided such costs of providing educational and vocational training,

 construction roads and sanitation and water systems, to the detriment and prejudice of Plaintiff.

- 40. Thus, contrary to the intentions of Charlie Cully when he obtained his original allotment and contrary to the Executive Order of President Wilson, the property was ultimately sold for the benefit of a single Indian, Peter Johnson (Margaret Johnson having died shortly after voting to liquidate the Rancheria).
- 41. The United States, acting through the Secretary of Interior, "has charged itself with moral obligations of the highest responsibility and trust. Its conduct, as disclosed in the acts of those who present in dealings with the Indians, should therefore be judged by the most exacting fiduciary standards." (Seminole Nation v. United States, 316 U.S. 286, 297 (1942).)
- 42. Under the California Rancheria Act, and as a trustee of the Indians subject thereto, the Secretary of the Interior was obligated to enter into whatever agreement or agreements with Indians of a given Rancheria electing to terminate thereunder as might be necessary to ensure that upon distribution of the Rancheria assets, the Rancheria's water supply, water distribution, sanitation and other facilities would be adequate to meet the reasonable present and foreseeable needs of all the people of the Rancheria.
- 43. The Secretary of the Interior was also obligated to provide tribal members such accurate and adequate information as to the relative advantages and disadvantages of accepting termination, the options available to them under the California Rancheria Act, and the legal consequences of exercising those options.
- 44. The BIA's breach of fiduciary obligations is amplified by the myopic view of its obligations under the Rancheria Act. Less than a month after the public notice period regarding the termination of the Rancheria ran in 1959, a member of the Yemie family contacted the BIA requesting information regarding the Rancheria's termination status and distributee plan. That Tribal member was told that the time to object to termination had passed so no information would be provided.
- 45. The BIA's breach of fiduciary obligations is further exemplified by the fact that although the public notice period had closed, the property was not actually sold for four more years.

- 51. The immediate effect of the termination of the Tribe and distribution of the assets of the Nevada City Rancheria were that: 1) the land was sold by the federal government on behalf of only one Tribal member, Peter Johnson; 2) the trust relationship between the United States and the Tribe, and the United States and the reservation lands, was terminated; 3) state and local legislative jurisdiction was imposed; 4) state judicial authority was imposed; 5) exemptions from state and local taxing authority ended; 6) federal programs to the Tribe and its individual members were terminated; 7) tribal sovereignty and tribal jurisdiction prerogatives were effectively, though not technically, ended as elements of tribal sovereignty generally cannot be practically implemented by tribes that do not have a land base over which to service sovereignty.
- 52. The long term effect of the termination under the Rancheria Act, in additional to those effects set forth in paragraph 48 was that a significant portion of tribal lands in California were transferred out of tribal and Indian ownership as non-Indians purchased the land through direct purchases, or through foreclosure actions and tax sales. In regard to the Tribe specifically, the long term effect of the Rancheria Act has been that approximately the majority, if not all, of the Tribe's land has passed out of tribal and Indian ownership into non-Indian ownership.

D. The Hardwick Litigation

distributees from the rancheria that were terminated by the Rancheria Act brought suit against the United States and county tax assessors and collectors for counties where Rancheria lands were located, in the United States District Court for the Northern District of California. In *Hardwick*, the plaintiffs asserted that the United States violated the Rancheria Act in its efforts to rapidly terminate 41 Rancherias (including the Nevada City Rancheria) under the Rancheria Act. Specifically, the plaintiffs in *Hardwick* asserted that the United States failed to properly inform the distributees of the legal effect of termination and that the distributees' lands would be subject to state and local taxation and regulation and that the distributees would no longer have access to federal programs and protections. In addition, the plaintiffs in *Hardwick* asserted that the United States misrepresented to the distributees that termination was mandatory when in fact the Rancheria Act required the agreement of the distributes who could maintain the status quo if they

- 56. The plaintiffs in the *Hardwick* litigation also sought to void the distribution plans, restore the federal government's trust obligations to the plaintiffs, and to declare null and void the purported termination of the Rancherias.
- 57. On January 31, 1986, the *Hardwick* plaintiffs amended their complaint. The amendment allowed a number of tribes that had reconstituted their formal federally recognized governments to intervene directly in the *Hardwick* litigation. In addition the amendment dropped as defendants a number of counties that had voluntarily resolved their issues with the tribes located in the specific counties.
- 58. Ultimately, the plaintiff class in *Hardwick* consisted of all distributees who received assets of the named rancheria, including their heirs and legatees and all Indian successors in interest to the real property distributed under the Rancheria Act, pursuant to the distribution plans prepared pursuant to the Rancheria Act.
- 59. Both prior to and subsequent to the filing of the *Hardwick* litigation, federal courts in California and the District of Columbia resolved disputes identical to those raised in the *Hardwick* litigation. (*See, e.g., Smith v. United States*, 515 F.Supp. 56 (N.D. Cal 1975); *Knight v. Kleppe*, Civ. No. C-74-005 WTS (N.D. Cal. 1976); *Duncan v. Andrus*, 517 F.Supp 1 (N.D. Cal. 1977); *Duncan v. United States*, 667 F.2d 36 (Ct.Cl. 1981).) In those actions, the courts ruled that the termination of rancherias and reservations was unlawful. The courts further ruled that the Rancheria reservation lands were never lawfully subjected to state and local regulation. The courts ordered the tribes and certain lands to be designated as reservation lands restored to the status they held immediately before the unlawful termination and directed that such reservation lands were to be treated as Indian country, subject to all of the privileges and protections afforded under federal law prior to the unlawful termination.
- 60. On July 15, 1983, with knowledge of the decisions rendered in *Smith v. United States*, 515 F.Supp. 56 (N.D. Cal 1975) and *Duncan v. Andrus*, 517 F.Supp 1 (N.D. Cal. 1977), and the pendency of similar actions in *Duncan, et al. v. United States*, No. 19-75 (Ct.Cl.), and *Table Bluff Band, et al. v. Andrus*, No. C-75-2525 (N.D. Cal.), the remaining parties in the *Hardwick* litigation entered into a Stipulated Judgment. The Stipulation for Entry of Judgment,

1994," Pub. L. 103-454, 108 Stat. 4791, 4792, codified at 25 U.S.C. §§ 479a and 479a-1 ("Tribe List Act"). The Tribe List Act was in response to a "growing and disturbing trend" on the part of the BIA to "capriciously and improperly withdraw[] federal recognition from a native group or leader." (H.R. Rep. No. 103-781, at 3 (1994), as reprinted in 1994 U.S.C.C.A.N. 3768, 3769 (footnotes omitted).)

- 65. The Tribe List Act requires the Secretary to "publish in the Federal Register a list of all Indian tribes which the Secretary recognizes to be eligible for the special programs and services provided by the United States to Indians because of their status as Indians." (Tribe List Act § 104(a).)
- 66. In enacting the Tribe List Act, Congress made several findings. For example, Congress found that the "list published by the Secretary should be accurate, regularly updated, and regularly published, since it is used by the various departments and agencies of the United States to determine the eligibility of certain groups to receive services from the United States." (Tribe List Act § 103(7) (codified at 25 U.S.C. § 479a note).) Congress also found that the "list of federally recognized tribes which the Secretary publishes should reflect all of the federally recognized Indian tribes in the United States which are eligible for the special programs and services provided by the United States to Indians because of their status as Indians." (Tribe List Act § 103(8) (codified at 25 U.S.C. § 479a note).)
- 67. The Tribe List Act commands the Secretary to publish the list of tribes every year on or before January 30. (Tribe List Act § 104(b) (codified at 25 U.S.C. § 479a-l(b)).)
- 68. The Secretary is currently in breach of the annual publication requirement having last caused a list to be published on April 4, 2008. (See 73 Fed. Reg. 66, at pg. 18553.) The Secretary is also in breach for failing to include Plaintiff on that list.
- 69. The Secretary has delegated responsibility for publishing the list to the Assistant Secretary for Indian Affairs. (See id.) However, as the officer of the United States specifically named in the Tribe List Act, the Secretary retains ultimate responsibility for ensuring compliance with the Tribe List Act.

Nevada City Rancheria Has Been Working For Many Years to Restore Its Federal 1 G. Recognition 2 For many years Tribal members sought support for the Tribe's restoration. Tribal 70. 3 members contacted their federal, state and local representatives and other California tribes 4 seeking restoration, culminating in discussions with staff to discuss restoration of the unlawfully 5 Nevada City Rancheria. The Nevada City Rancheria has continued to seek and to receive support 6 from the local community, the state and federal officials for its restoration efforts. 7 The strain and impact of the termination left the Tribe struggling for many years 71. 8 to continue and maintain its governance. This was extremely difficult and time consuming 9 because the Tribe has few resources and no recognized tribal lands. Plaintiff is one of a handful 10 of terminated California tribes that remains in existence, governing its numbers, yet 11 unrecognized by the federal government. See Status of California Rancherias Terminated 12 Pursuant to the Rancheria Act. 13 As a result of the Tribe's purported termination, the Tribe and its membership 72. 14 have been greatly damaged, including but not limited to the following losses: 15 The Tribe has been prevented from participating in government programs 16 specifically intended for American Indian Tribal Governments; and 17 The Tribe's ability to govern itself and exercise its sovereignty and b. 18 domination had been compromised; and 19 The Tribe's members' land became taxable under the laws of the State of c. 20 California but for the wrongful termination of the Tribe; and 21 The Tribe's members, few if any of whom received any training in đ. 22 financial management completed by the Act, were unable to pay said property taxes and were 23 forced to sell their land at a fraction of its true value to avoid foreclosure sales; and 24 The Tribe's members trust and land became an available asset subject to e. 25 credit process; and 26 The Tribe's members lost their land to satisfy creditors' claims; and f. 27 The Tribe's members were denied access to BIA programs and grants and g. 28

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- Plaintiff realleges paragraphs 1 through 74 and incorporates those paragraphs herein as if set forth in full.
- 76. Under Section 2(a) of the Rancheria Act, the Secretary of the Interior was required to develop a distribution plan with all Rancheria distributees prior to terminating the Rancheria and its members.
 - 77. Despite these specific obligations, Defendants wrongfully terminated Plaintiff by

1	failing to develop a valid distribution plans and failing to convey deeds to parcels of the
2	Rancheria before and/or without consulting and obtaining consent by the Nevada City Rancheria
3	distributees.
4	WHEREFORE, the Plaintiff prays for relief as set forth below.
5	SECOND CLAIM FOR RELIEF
6	(Breach of Rancheria Act Against All Defendants)
7	78. Plaintiff realleges paragraphs 1 through 77 and incorporates those paragraphs
8	herein as if set forth in full.
9	79. Under Section 8 of the Rancheria Act, the Secretary of the Interior was required,
10	prior to termination of a rancheria, to "protect the rights of individual Indians who are minors,
11	non compos mentis, or in the opinion of the Secretary in need of assistance in conduct of their
12	affairs, by causing the appointment of guardians for such Indians in courts of competent
13	jurisdiction, or by such other means as he may deem adequate, without application from such
14	Indians "
15	80. Despite these specific obligations, Defendants wrongfully terminated Plaintiff by
16	failing to protect the rights of minors, failing to cause the appointment of guardians and failing to
17	take any substantive actions to protect those minors.
18	WHEREFORE, the Plaintiff prays for relief as set forth below.
19	THIRD CLAIM FOR RELIEF
20	(Breach of Rancheria Act Against All Defendants)
21	81. Plaintiff realleges paragraphs 1 through 80 and incorporates those paragraphs
22	herein as if set forth in full.
23	82. Under Section 9 of the Rancheria Act, the Secretary of the Interior was required,
24	prior to termination of a rancheria, to implement education and vocational training programs for
25	the benefit of the Rancheria Indians.
26	83. Despite these specific obligations, Defendants wrongfully terminated Plaintiff by
27	developing distribution plans and conveying deeds to parcels of the Rancheria before and/or
28	without implementing education and vocation training programs for the benefit of the Rancheria

1	Indians.
2	WHEREFORE, the Plaintiff prays for relief as set forth below.
3	FOURTH CLAIM FOR RELIEF
4	(Breach of Rancheria Act Against All Defendants)
5	84. Plaintiff realleges paragraphs 1 through 83 and incorporates those paragraphs
6	herein as if set forth in full.
7	85. In passing the Rancheria Act into law, Congress intended that termination would
8	be the result of a voluntary process by which designated Indian communities would choose to
9	accept termination in exchange for the provision of a number of government services which
10	would aid those communities in becoming economically sound.
11	86. Congressional intent behind the Rancheria Act, as well as the fiduciary duty owed
12	by the Defendants to the Plaintiff, required the BIA to accomplish the congressional policy of
13	termination in a manner calculated to advance the interests of said Indians. The Defendants
14	breached their trust duty to the Plaintiff under the Rancheria Act in the following ways:
15	a. Defendants failed to seek and obtain the votes of all eligible Tribal
16	members in regards to the IRA vote.
17	b. Defendants failed to distribute the proceeds and land of the Nevada City
18	Rancheria to all distributes.
19	c. Defendants failed to provide services as required by the Rancheria Act.
20	WHEREFORE, the Plaintiff prays for relief as set forth below.
21	FIFTH CLAIM FOR RELIEF
22	(Breach of Fiduciary Duty)
23	87. The Tribe realleges paragraphs 1 through 86 and incorporates those paragraphs
24	herein as if set forth in full.
25	88. The Secretary, acting on behalf of the United States, owes a fiduciary duty to the
26	Tribe because the Tribe's termination was not effectuated in conformance with the requirements
27	of the California Rancheria Act, thereby rendering the Tribe's termination void and of no legal
28	effect.

preservation of Indian tribes and their resources").

- The Secretary's fiduciary duty is further evidenced by the numerous federal statutes in which Congress has made express findings regarding the existence of such a duty. See, e.g., Native American Housing and Self-Determination Act, 25 U.S.C. § 4101(2)-(4) (finding that "there exists a unique relationship between the Government of the United States and the governments of Indian tribes;" the United States has "undertaken a unique trust responsibility to protect and support Indian tribes," and "Congress . . . has assumed a trust responsibility for the protection and preservation of Indian tribes"); Indian Health Care Improvement Act, 25 U.S.C. § 1601(a) (finding that "Federal health services to maintain and improve the health of the Indians are consonant with and required by the Federal Government's historical and unique legal relationship with, and resulting responsibility to, the American Indian people"); Indian Child Welfare Act, 25 U.S.C. § 1901(2) (finding that "Congress, through statutes, treaties, and the
- The Secretary breached his fiduciary duty to the Tribe by failing to include the 91. Tribe on the statutorily mandated list of federally recognized tribes, despite the fact that the Secretary currently recognizes that the Tribe's purported termination was unlawful and that the Tribe satisfies all requirements for being eligible to participate in the special programs and services provided by the United States to Indians because of their status as Indians.

general course of dealing with Indian tribes, has assumed the responsibility for the protection and

As a direct and proximate result of the Secretary's failure to include the Tribe on 92. the statutorily mandated list of federally recognized tribes, the Tribe has been and continues to be ineligible for the "protection, services and benefits of the Federal government available to Indian tribes by virtue of their status as tribes" pursuant to 25 C.F.R. § 83.2.

WHEREFORE, the Tribe prays for relief as set forth below.

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1	SIXTH CLAIM FOR RELIEF
2	(Agency Action Unlawfully Withheld or Unreasonably Delayed)
3	93. The Tribe realleges paragraphs 1 through 92 and incorporates those paragraphs
4	herein as if set forth in full.
5	94. The Administrative Procedure Act ("APA") authorizes judicial review for those
6	suffering legal wrong because of agency action. (5 U.S.C. § 702.)
7	95. An agency's "failure to act" constitutes "agency action." (Id. § 551(13).) The
8	APA therefore authorizes a reviewing court to "compel agency action unlawfully withheld or
9	unreasonably delayed." (Id. § 706(1).)
10	96. The Secretary's failure to publish a list of federally recognized tribes that includes
11	the Tribe's name constitutes "agency action."
12.	97. Upon information and belief, which is likely to have evidentiary support after a
13	reasonable opportunity for further investigation or discovery, the Secretary currently recognizes
14	that the Tribe's purported termination was unlawful and that the Tribe satisfies all requirements
15	for being eligible to participate in the special programs and services provided by the United
16	States to Indians because of their status as Indians.
17	98. As a direct and proximate result of the Secretary's failure to include the Tribe on
18	the statutorily mandated list of federally recognized tribes, the Tribe has been and continues to be
19	ineligible for the "protection, services and benefits of the Federal government available to Indian
20	tribes by virtue of their status as tribes" pursuant to 25 C.F.R. § 83.2.
21	WHEREFORE, the Tribe prays for relief as set forth below.
22	PRAYER FOR RELIEF
23	WHEREFORE Plaintiff demands judgment and requests the following legal and
24	equitable relief:
25	1. That this Court declare:
26	i. The Nevada City Rancheria was unlawfully terminated, and its assets

The Secretary of the Interior is under a duty to take Designated Lands into

distributed, in violation of the Rancheria Act and the government's trust policy;

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ii.

1	federal trust for the use and benefit of the Tribe and afford all such rights and benefits
2	attributable to Indian lands;
3	iii. The Termination Proclamations for the Rancheria were unlawfully
4	published, and the Secretary of the Interior is under an obligation to rescind the same;
5	iv. The Nevada City Rancheria is not a terminated Tribe within the meaning
6	of Section 10(b) of the Rancheria Act, and the Defendants are under an obligation to treat them
7	as a federally-recognized Tribe;
8	v. The Constitution and Bylaws of the Nevada City Rancheria, as amended,
9	are now restored and in effect;
10	vi. The Secretary of the Interior is under a duty to afford the Nevada City
11	Rancheria all rights, privileges and immunities ordinarily accorded to a federally-recognized
12	Indian Tribe existing on Indian lands;
13	vii. The lands compromising the Nevada City Rancheria were and still are
14	"Indian country" and such lands now or in the future to be acquired by the Tribe are immune
15	from local property taxation, assessment or other civil regulatory jurisdiction and shall be
16	restored to the same status as before termination;
17	viii. The lands comprising the Nevada City Rancheria are not subject to the
18	jurisdiction of Nevada County, and further the land would not be subject to county regulation
19	and taxation until such time as the lands were lawfully conveyed to individual distributees and
20	removed from trust in full compliance with all of the provisions of the Rancheria Act;
21	ix. The Secretary of the Interior is under a duty to acquire and take land into
22	trust for the benefit of the Nevada City Rancheria pursuant to the Indian Recognition Act, 25
23	U.S.C. § 465;
24	x. The Secretary of the Interior is under a duty to take into trust land base for
25	the benefit of the Tribe, which such land to be considered "Indian country" as defined in 18
26	U.S.C. § 1151.
27	2. That this Court issue preliminary and permanent injunction relief compelling the

Defendants to afford the Nevada City Rancheria all rights, privileges and immunities ordinarily

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accorded to a federally-recognized Indian Tribe. That this Court order Defendants to pay Plaintiff the cost of bringing this action 3. 2 and reasonable attorneys' fees. 3 An award of monetary damages to be determined at trial. 3. 4 That this Court order such further relief as it shall deem appropriate. 4. 5 SCHARFF, BRADY & VINDING Dated: January 19, 2010 6 7 8 By: 9 Attorneys for Plaintiff Nisenan Maidu Tribe of the Nevada City 10 Rancheria 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28