

Public Law 103-324
103d Congress

An Act

Sept. 21, 1994
[S. 1357]

To reaffirm and clarify the Federal relationships of the Little Traverse Bay Bands of Odawa Indians and the Little River Band of Ottawa Indians as distinct federally recognized Indian tribes, and for other purposes.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Little Traverse Bay Bands of Odawa Indians and the Little River Band of Ottawa Indians Act".

SEC. 2. FINDINGS.

Congress finds the following:

(1) The Little Traverse Bay Bands of Odawa Indians and the Little River Band of Ottawa Indians are descendants of, and political successors to, signatories of the 1836 Treaty of Washington and the 1855 Treaty of Detroit.

(2) The Grand Traverse Band of Ottawa and Chippewa Indians, the Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians, and the Bay Mills Band of Chippewa Indians, whose members are also descendants of the signatories to the 1836 Treaty of Washington and the 1855 Treaty of Detroit, have been recognized by the Federal Government as distinct Indian tribes.

(3) The Little Traverse Bay Bands of Odawa Indians consists of at least 1,000 eligible members who continue to reside close to their ancestral homeland as recognized in the Little Traverse Reservation in the 1836 Treaty of Washington and 1855 Treaty of Detroit, which area is now known as Emmet and Charlevoix Counties, Michigan.

(4) The Little River Band of Ottawa Indians consists of at least 500 eligible members who continue to reside close to their ancestral homeland as recognized in the Manistee Reservation in the 1836 Treaty of Washington and reservation in the 1855 Treaty of Detroit, which area is now known as Manistee and Mason Counties, Michigan.

(5) The Bands filed for reorganization of their existing tribal governments in 1935 under the Act of June 18, 1934 (25 U.S.C. 461 et seq.; commonly referred to as the "Indian Reorganization Act"). Federal agents who visited the Bands, including Commissioner of Indian Affairs, John Collier, attested to the continued social and political existence of the Bands and concluded that the Bands were eligible for reorganization. Due to a lack of Federal appropriations to implement the provi-

Little Traverse
Bay Bands of
Odawa Indians
and the Little
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25 USC 1300k
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25 USC 1300k.

sions of such Act, the Bands were denied the opportunity to reorganize.

(6) In spite of such denial, the Bands continued their political and social existence with viable tribal governments. The Bands, along with other Michigan Odawa/Ottawa groups, including the tribes described in paragraph (2), formed the Northern Michigan Ottawa Association in 1948. The Association subsequently pursued a successful land claim with the Indian Claims Commission.

(7) Between 1948 and 1975, the Bands carried out many of their governmental functions through the Northern Michigan Ottawa Association, while retaining individual Band control over local decisions.

(8) In 1975, the Northern Michigan Ottawa Association petitioned under the Act of June 18, 1934 (25 U.S.C. 461 et seq.; commonly referred to as the "Indian Reorganization Act"), to form a government on behalf of the Bands. Again in spite of the Bands' eligibility, the Bureau of Indian Affairs failed to act on their request.

(9) The United States Government, the government of the State of Michigan, and local governments have had continuous dealings with the recognized political leaders of the Bands from 1836 to the present.

SEC. 3. DEFINITIONS.

25 USC 1300k-1.

For purposes of this Act—

(1) the term "Bands" means the Little Traverse Bay Bands of Odawa Indians and the Little River Band of Ottawa Indians;

(2) the term "member" means those individuals enrolled in the Bands pursuant to section 7; and

(3) the term "Secretary" means the Secretary of the Interior.

SEC. 4. FEDERAL RECOGNITION.

25 USC 1300k-2.

(a) FEDERAL RECOGNITION.—Federal recognition of the Little Traverse Bay Bands of Odawa Indians and the Little River Band of Ottawa Indians is hereby reaffirmed. All laws and regulations of the United States of general application to Indians or nations, tribes, or bands of Indians, including the Act of June 18, 1934 (25 U.S.C. 461 et seq.; commonly referred to as the "Indian Reorganization Act"), which are not inconsistent with any specific provision of this Act shall be applicable to the Bands and their members.

(b) FEDERAL SERVICES AND BENEFITS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Bands and their members shall be eligible for all services and benefits provided by the Federal Government to Indians because of their status as federally recognized Indians, and notwithstanding any other provision of law, such services and benefits shall be provided after the date of the enactment of this Act to the Bands and their members without regard to the existence of a reservation or the location of the residence of any member on or near any Indian reservation.

(2) SERVICE AREAS.—

(A) LITTLE TRAVERSE BAY BANDS.—For purposes of the delivery of Federal services to the enrolled members of the Little Traverse Bay Bands of Odawa Indians, the area of the State of Michigan within 70 miles of the boundaries of the reservations for the Little Traverse Bay Bands as

set out in Article I, paragraphs "third" and "fourth" of the Treaty of 1855, 11 Stat. 621, shall be deemed to be within or near a reservation, notwithstanding the establishment of a reservation for the tribe after the date of the enactment of this Act. Services may be provided to members outside the named service area unless prohibited by law or program regulations.

(B) **LITTLE RIVER BAND.**—For purposes of the delivery of Federal services to enrolled members of the Little River Band of Ottawa Indians, the Counties of Manistee, Mason, Wexford and Lake, in the State of Michigan, shall be deemed to be within or near a reservation, notwithstanding the establishment of a reservation for the tribe after the date of the enactment of this Act. Services may be provided to members outside the named Counties unless prohibited by law or program regulations.

25 USC 1300k-3.

SEC. 5. REAFFIRMATION OF RIGHTS.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—All rights and privileges of the Bands, and their members thereof, which may have been abrogated or diminished before the date of the enactment of this Act are hereby reaffirmed.

(b) **EXISTING RIGHTS OF TRIBE.**—Nothing in this Act shall be construed to diminish any right or privilege of the Bands, or of their members, that existed prior to the date of enactment of this Act. Except as otherwise specifically provided in any other provision of this Act, nothing in this Act shall be construed as altering or affecting any legal or equitable claim the Bands might have to enforce any right or privilege reserved by or granted to the Bands which were wrongfully denied to or taken from the Bands prior to the enactment of this Act.

Real property.
25 USC 1300k-4.

SEC. 6. TRANSFER OF LAND FOR THE BENEFIT OF THE BANDS.

(a) **LITTLE TRAVERSE BAY BANDS.**—The Secretary shall acquire real property in Emmet and Charlevoix Counties for the benefit of the Little Traverse Bay Bands. The Secretary shall also accept any real property located in those Counties for the benefit of the Little Traverse Bay Bands if conveyed or otherwise transferred to the Secretary, if at the time of such acceptance, there are no adverse legal claims on such property including outstanding liens, mortgages or taxes owed.

(b) **LITTLE RIVER BAND.**—The Secretary shall acquire real property in Manistee and Mason Counties for the benefit of the Little River Band. The Secretary shall also accept any real property located in those Counties for the benefit of the Little River Band if conveyed or otherwise transferred to the Secretary, if at the time of such acceptance, there are no adverse legal claims on such property including outstanding liens, mortgages or taxes owed.

(c) **ADDITIONAL LANDS.**—The Secretary may accept any additional acreage in each of the Bands' service area specified by section 4(b) of this Act pursuant to his authority under the Act of June 18, 1934 (25 U.S.C. 461 et seq.; commonly referred to as the "Indian Reorganization Act").

(d) **RESERVATION.**—Subject to the conditions imposed by this section, the land acquired by or transferred to the Secretary under or pursuant to this section shall be taken in the name of the United States in trust for the Bands and shall be a part of the respective Bands' reservation.

SEC. 7. MEMBERSHIP.

25 USC 1300k-5.

Not later than 18 months after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Bands shall submit to the Secretary membership rolls consisting of all individuals currently enrolled for membership in such Bands. The qualifications for inclusion on the membership rolls of the Bands shall be determined by the membership clauses in such Bands' respective governing documents, in consultation with the Secretary. Upon completion of the rolls, the Secretary shall immediately publish notice of such in the Federal Register. The Bands shall ensure that such rolls are maintained and kept current.

Federal
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Records.**SEC. 8. CONSTITUTION AND GOVERNING BODY.**

25 USC 1300k-6.

(a) CONSTITUTION.—

(1) **ADOPTION.**—Not later than 24 months after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall conduct, by secret ballot, elections for the purposes of adopting new constitutions for the Bands. The elections shall be held according to the procedures applicable to elections under section 16 of the Act of June 18, 1934 (25 U.S.C. 476; commonly referred to as the "Indian Reorganization Act").

(2) **INTERIM GOVERNING DOCUMENTS.**—Until such time as new constitutions are adopted under paragraph (1), the governing documents in effect on the date of the enactment of this Act shall be the interim governing documents for the Bands.

(b) OFFICIALS.—

(1) **ELECTION.**—Not later than 6 months after the Bands adopt constitutions and bylaws pursuant to subsection (a), the Bands shall conduct elections by secret ballot for the purpose of electing officials for the Bands as provided in the Bands' respective governing constitutions. The elections shall be conducted according to the procedures described in the Bands' constitutions and bylaws.

(2) **INTERIM GOVERNMENTS.**—Until such time as the Bands elect new officials pursuant to paragraph (1), the Bands' governing bodies shall be those governing bodies in place on the date of the enactment of this Act, or any new governing bodies selected under the election procedures specified in the respective interim governing documents of the Bands.

Approved September 21, 1994.

LEGISLATIVE HISTORY—S. 1357:

HOUSE REPORTS: No. 103-621 (Comm. on Natural Resources).

SENATE REPORTS: No. 103-260 (Comm. on Indian Affairs).

CONGRESSIONAL RECORD, Vol. 140 (1994):

May 25, considered and passed Senate.

Aug. 3, considered and passed House.