

Trump regime threatens Mashpee Wampanoag land

written by Struggle - La Lucha

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The Mashpee Wampanoag Tribe, also known as the People of the First Light, has inhabited present-day Massachusetts and eastern Rhode Island for more than 12,000 years. After an arduous process lasting more than three decades, the Mashpee

Wampanoag were re-acknowledged as a federally recognized tribe in 2007. In 2015, the federal government declared 150 acres of land in Mashpee and 170 acres of land in Taunton as the Tribe's initial reservation, on which the Tribe can exercise its full tribal sovereignty rights. The Mashpee Tribe currently has approximately 2,600 enrolled citizens.

Message from the chairman: We will take action to prevent the loss of our land

March 27: At 4 p.m. today — on the very day that the United States has reached a record 100,000 confirmed cases of the coronavirus and our Tribe is desperately struggling with responding to this devastating pandemic — the Bureau of Indian Affairs informed me that the Secretary of the Interior has ordered that our reservation be disestablished and that our land be taken out of trust. Not since the termination era of the mid-twentieth century has a secretary taken action to disestablish a reservation.

Today's action was cruel and it was unnecessary. The secretary is under no court order to take our land out of trust. He is fully aware that litigation to uphold our status as a tribe eligible for the benefits of the Indian Reorganization Act is ongoing.

It begs the question, what is driving our federal trustee's crusade against our reservation?

Regardless of the answer, we the People of the First Light have lived here since before there was a Secretary of the Interior, since before there was a State of Massachusetts, since before the Pilgrims arrived 400 years ago. We have survived, we will continue to survive. These are our lands, these are the lands of our ancestors, and these will be the lands of our grandchildren. This administration has come and it will go. But we will be here, always. And we will not rest until we are treated equally with other federally recognized tribes and the status of our

reservation is confirmed.

I will continue to provide updates on this important issue in the coming days as we take action to prevent the loss of our trust status.

Kutâputunumuw;

Chairman Cedric Cromwell

Qaqeemasq (Running Bear)

Source: [Mashpee Wampanoag Tribe](#)

