



For Immediate Distribution
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Chukchansi Tribe and Madera County Reach a New Agreement to Expand Law Enforcement and Fire Protection Services

Agreement will bring additional 24/7 Sheriff and fire emergency response services

Oakhurst, CA – Today, the Picayune Rancheria of the Chukchansi Indians celebrated the execution of a new Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Madera County that will expand Sheriff and fire services to Chukchansi tribal land and the surrounding community.

Under the new MOU, the Tribe will increase funding to the Madera County Chukchansi Station 8 Fire Station to increase staffing and utilize a fire truck purchased by the Tribe. A new sign for the Chukchansi Station 8 Fire Station bearing the Tribe's logo was unveiled to celebrate the agreement. The MOU also recognizes changes in federal and state law and regulation regarding the Tribe's jurisdiction to regulate cannabis in its territory. These changes allow the Tribe to incorporate cannabis into its broader economic development strategy to the benefit of Tribal members.

"We're thrilled to strengthen our relationship with the County," **said Tribal Chairwoman Claudia Gonzales**. "This agreement will increase our capacity to protect the Tribe in a way that respects the Tribe's interests and our sovereignty. The increased Sheriff patrol will go a long way to increase safety and peace of mind for our community, and we all saw the need for firefighting services firsthand last summer with the devastating Creek Fire right at our doorstep."

"After many years of meetings and negotiations, it is so great to get this done," **said Madera County Supervisor Tom Wheeler**. "We are looking forward to many years of working together to ensure that Madera County stays the best place to live, work, and play."

2020 was California's worst fire season in recorded history as the Creek Fire burned nearly 400,000 acres and over 800 buildings across Fresno and Madera Counties.

"The Tribe's commitments in the MOU will be vital to protecting the Chukchansi Gold Resort & Casino and the surrounding community through this drought," **said Madera County Fire Division Chief Matt Watson**.

In addition to expanded fire services, the new MOU reimburses the Madera County Sheriff's Office for patrolling the Tribe's casino and provides funding for the acquisition of 2 new patrol vehicles that will be kept at the casino.

"The Madera County Sheriff's Office values our continued partnership with the Chukchansi Tribal Community," **said Madera County Sheriff Tyson Pogue**. "The addition of dedicated patrol vehicles assigned to the casino will be a great asset for our deputies to provide the highest level of safety and security for Tribal members and visitors who come to enjoy all that Madera County has to offer."



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About the Picayune Rancheria of the Chukchansi Indians:

The Picayune Rancheria of Chukchansi Indians is a federally recognized Indian tribe based in Oakhurst, California. The Tribe owns and operates the award-winning Chukchansi Gold Resort & Casino in Coarsegold and several businesses, including the Chukchansi Crossing Fuel Station & Travel Center, the Willow Glen Smoke Shop, and a new Sonic Restaurant.