

116TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 1388

To take lands in Sonoma County, California, into trust as part of the reservation of the Lytton Rancheria of California, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

FEBRUARY 27, 2019

Mr. HUFFMAN introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Natural Resources

A BILL

To take lands in Sonoma County, California, into trust as part of the reservation of the Lytton Rancheria of California, and for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Lytton Rancheria
5 Homelands Act of 2019”.

6 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

7 Congress finds the following:

8 (1) The Lytton Rancheria of California is a fed-
9 erally recognized Indian tribe that lost its homeland
10 after its relationship to the United States was un-

1 justly and unlawfully terminated in 1958. The Tribe
2 was restored to Federal recognition in 1991, but the
3 conditions of its restoration have prevented it from
4 regaining a homeland on its original lands.

5 (2) Congress needs to take action to reverse
6 historic injustices that befell the Tribe and that have
7 prevented it from regaining a viable homeland for its
8 people.

9 (3) Prior to European contact there were as
10 many as 350,000 Indians living in what is now the
11 State of California. By the turn of the 19th century,
12 that number had been reduced to approximately
13 15,000 individuals, many of them homeless and liv-
14 ing in scattered bands and communities.

15 (4) The Lytton Rancheria's original homeland
16 was purchased by the United States in 1926 pursu-
17 ant to congressional authority designed to remedy
18 the unique tragedy that befell the Indians of Cali-
19 fornia and provide them with reservations called
20 Rancherias to be held in trust by the United States.

21 (5) After the Lytton Rancheria lands were pur-
22 chased by the United States, the Tribe settled on
23 the land and sustained itself for several decades by
24 farming and ranching.

1 (6) By the mid-1950s, Federal Indian policy
2 had shifted back towards a policy of terminating the
3 Federal relationship with Indian tribes. In 1958,
4 Congress enacted the Rancheria Act of 1958 (72
5 Stat. 619), which slated 41 Rancherias in California,
6 including the Lytton Rancheria, for termination
7 after certain conditions were met.

8 (7) On August 1, 1961, the Federal Govern-
9 ment terminated its relationship with the Lytton
10 Rancheria. This termination was illegal because the
11 conditions for termination under the Rancheria Act
12 had never been met. After termination was imple-
13 mented, the Tribe lost its lands and was left without
14 any means of supporting itself.

15 (8) In 1987, the Tribe joined three other tribes
16 in a lawsuit against the United States challenging
17 the illegal termination of their Rancherias. A Stipu-
18 lated Judgment in the case, *Scotts Valley Band of*
19 *Pomo Indians of the Sugar Bowl Rancheria v.*
20 *United States*, No. C-86-3660 (N.D.Cal. March 22,
21 1991), restored the Lytton Rancheria to its status
22 as a federally recognized Indian tribe.

23 (9) The Stipulated Judgment provides that the
24 Lytton Rancheria would have the “individual and
25 collective status and rights” which it had prior to its

1 termination and expressly contemplated the acquisi-
2 tion of trust lands for the Lytton Rancheria.

3 (10) The Stipulated Judgment contains provi-
4 sions, included at the request of the local county
5 governments and neighboring landowners, that pro-
6 hibit the Lytton Rancheria from exercising its full
7 Federal rights on its original homeland in the Alex-
8 ander Valley.

9 (11) In 2000, approximately 9.5 acres of land
10 in San Pablo, California, was placed in trust status
11 for the Lytton Rancheria for economic development
12 purposes.

13 (12) The Tribe has since acquired, from willing
14 sellers at fair market value, property in Sonoma
15 County near the Tribe's historic Rancheria. This
16 property, which the Tribe holds in fee status, is suit-
17 able for a new homeland for the Tribe.

18 (13) On a portion of the land to be taken into
19 trust, which portion totals approximately 124.12
20 acres, the Tribe plans to build housing for its mem-
21 bers and governmental and community facilities.

22 (14) A portion of the land to be taken into
23 trust is being used for viticulture, and the Tribe in-
24 tends to develop more of the lands to be taken into
25 trust for viticulture. The Tribe's investment in the

1 ongoing viniculture operation has reinvigorated the
2 vineyards, which are producing high-quality wines.
3 The Tribe is operating its vineyards on a sustainable
4 basis and is working toward certification of sustain-
5 ability.

6 (15) No gaming shall be conducted on the lands
7 to be taken into trust by this Act.

8 (16) No gaming shall be conducted on any
9 lands taken into trust on behalf of the Tribe in
10 Sonoma County after the date of the enactment of
11 this Act.

12 (17) By directing that these lands be taken into
13 trust, the United States will ensure that the Lytton
14 Rancheria will finally have a permanently protected
15 homeland on which the Tribe can once again live
16 communally and plan for future generations. This
17 action is necessary to fully restore the Tribe to the
18 status it had before it was wrongfully terminated in
19 1961.

20 (18) The Tribe and County of Sonoma have en-
21 tered into a Memorandum of Agreement as amended
22 in 2018 in which the County agrees to the lands in
23 the County being taken into trust for the benefit of
24 the Tribe in consideration for commitments made by
25 the Tribe.

1 **SEC. 3. DEFINITIONS.**

2 For the purpose of this Act, the following definitions
3 apply:

4 (1) COUNTY.—The term “County” means
5 Sonoma County, California.

6 (2) SECRETARY.—The term “Secretary” means
7 the Secretary of the Interior.

8 (3) TRIBE.—The term “Tribe” means the
9 Lytton Rancheria of California.

10 **SEC. 4. LANDS TO BE TAKEN INTO TRUST.**

11 (a) IN GENERAL.—The land owned by the Tribe and
12 generally depicted on the map titled “Lytton Fee Owned
13 Property to be Taken into Trust” and dated May 1, 2015,
14 is hereby taken into trust for the benefit of the Tribe, sub-
15 ject to valid existing rights, contracts, and management
16 agreements related to easements and rights-of-way.

17 (b) LANDS TO BE MADE PART OF THE RESERVA-
18 TION.—Lands taken into trust under subsection (a) shall
19 be part of the Tribe’s reservation and shall be adminis-
20 tered in accordance with the laws and regulations gen-
21 erally applicable to property held in trust by the United
22 States for an Indian tribe.

23 **SEC. 5. GAMING.**

24 (a) LANDS TAKEN INTO TRUST UNDER THIS ACT.—
25 Lands taken into trust for the benefit of the Tribe under

1 section 4 shall not be eligible for gaming under the Indian
2 Gaming Regulatory Act (25 U.S.C. 2701 et seq.).

3 (b) OTHER LANDS TAKEN INTO TRUST.—Lands
4 taken into trust for the benefit of the Tribe in Sonoma
5 County after the date of the enactment of this Act shall
6 not be eligible for gaming under the Indian Gaming Regu-
7 latory Act (25 U.S.C. 2710 et seq.).

8 **SEC. 6. APPLICABILITY OF CERTAIN LAW.**

9 Notwithstanding any other provision of law, the
10 Memorandum of Agreement entered into by the Tribe and
11 the County concerning taking land in the County into
12 trust for the benefit of the Tribe, which was approved by
13 the County Board of Supervisors on March 10, 2015, and
14 any addenda and supplement or amendment thereto, is
15 not subject to review or approval of the Secretary in order
16 to be effective, including review or approval under section
17 2103 of the Revised Statutes (25 U.S.C. 81).

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