

EASTERN PEQUOT INDIANS OF CONNECTICUT

REG # 2245
June 28, 1978

Lantern Hill Reservation
R.F.D., No. 7, Box 941
Ledyard, Connecticut
06339

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Rec'd A/S Indian Affairs

JUL 8 1978

Assistant Secretary; Indian Affairs
Department of the Interior
18th and C Streets N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20245

Dear Assistant Secretary;

We, the Eastern Pequot Indians of Connecticut, do petition an acknowledgement that we exist as a tribal entity eligible for services from the Bureau of Indian Affairs.

We, the Eastern Pequot Indians of Connecticut are the direct lineal descendants of the Pequot Nation, whose reservation; the Eastern Pequot reservation, established in 1683 was and has been for many hundreds of years located in North Stonington, Connecticut. Our Pequot ancestors have lived on this reservation for centuries and it is our present home. The Eastern Pequot tribal family derives from our great, great, ancestor, Tamer Brushel. Tamer's mother and father lived on the Pequot reservation in the late seventeenth hundreds and Tamer was born on the reservation. In 1848 Tamer Brushel married Emanuel Sebastian.

Throughout their history the Pequot Indians and many other New England tribes were subjected to a cultural, social, and political evolution. This complex evolution was engendered by the invasion of the American settlers. The Pequot Indians were split-up and forced to move to other areas to protect their tribal families, homes, lands, and to sustain survival. The major resource for Pequot existence was their natural environment; the land.

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The Pequot Indians were known to be great and fierce warriors and traditionally shaved one side or both sides of the head. They were also great hunters, farmers, fishermen, and basket-weavers and lived in dwellings made out of what they could attain from the land such as; wood, animal skins, bark and leaves.

The Pequot Indians held tribal meetings throughout the seasons, but religiously gathered on the forth Sunday of each month. At the tribal meetings they would make decisions regarding tribal funds, lands, and the overseers. They would also celebrate their cultural traditions. Sometimes the meeting were held at a place on the reservation called Lake Swamp, which was like a beautiful island, but had quicksand in some parts, and copperhead snakes. There was also a saw-rig on the reservation that the tribe utilized to cut trees for building dwellings, making fires, and selling. Tribal decisions were made by petitioning.

The Pequot Indians attended an annual August meeting held by the Narragansett Indians. At these gatherings both tribes discussed similiar tribal concerns and celebrated their cultural traditions of tribal prayers, music and dancing, and skillful games. In addition to the annual August meeting there were close blood-bonds between the Pequots and the Narragansetts; as there were inter-marriages.

Historically, documentary accounts of the Eastern Pequot Indians were made from the early eighteen hundreds to the early nineteen hundreds. These accounts, listed as court records, were written by overseers, who were appointed by the courts. Gilbert Billings, overseer of the Eastern Pequot Indians from 1889 to 1891 records Tamer Sebastian as an Eastern Pequot Tribal Member and receiving goods from the Eastern Pequot Indian Tribal Funds.

*(Exhibit A--Overseer's Annual Account--Gilbert Billings)

Chat P. Chipman, overseer of the Eastern Pequot Indians from 1868 to 1880 records Mary E. Watson Sebastian and Calvin Sebastian as Eastern Pequot Indian Tribal Members and as receiving goods from the Eastern Pequot Indian Tribal Funds.

*(Exhibit B-- Overseer's Annual Account--Chat P. Chipman)

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Silas Cheseborough, overseer of the Eastern Pequot Indians, from 1827 to 1831 documents in the court records that Tamer Brushel Sebastian, her father Moses Brushel, and her brother, John Brushel, and other relatives as living on the Eastern Pequot Indian Reservation and receiving goods from the Eastern Pequot Indian Tribal Funds. (Exhibit C--Overseer's Annual Account--Silas Cheseborough)

The article "Pequot-Nehantic Indians" from the Old Mystic Colonial Museum, "Works of Eva Butler" records Tamer Brushell as an expert basket-maker. This article also records Lina Tamer Sebastian, widow of Calvin Williams, and the daughter of Tamer and Emmanuel Sebastian; as the last of the old basket makers who lived on the reservation.

*(Exhibit D-- The article, "Pequot-Nehantic Indians)

Other well-known Pequot Indian names such as Abner, Shelly, Skesuck, Ned, and Shunctouk; listed in the records of the overseer Silas Cheseborough (1827-1831) appear in the works of Eva Butler, who has documented early research about the Pequot Indians.

*(Exhibit C--Overseer's Annual Account--Silas Cheseborough)

*(Exhibit D-- The article, "Pequot-Nehantic Indians)

Presently, the Eastern Pequot Indian Tribe consists of the lineal descendants of our great, great ancestor, Tamer Brushel Sebastian. These descendants are living on the same Eastern Pequot Indian Reservation, which was established in 1683. The reservation is still quite beautiful; although there are swampy areas and copperhead snakes. The Eastern Pequot tribal members who are now living on the reservation are John L. Sebastian, Ann Sebastian Carpenter, Josephine Sebastian Winn, Benjamin H. Sebastian, Idabelle Sebastian Jordan, Lillian Sebastian, Arthur Sebastian, Lawrence Sebastian, and Roy Sebastian Jr. These tribal members have resided on the Eastern Pequot Indian Reservation between the years of 1930 and the present date.

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The Eastern Pequot tribal members live by a variety of occupations, yet still remain to be great warriors, fishermen, hunters, and farmers. Descendants of our great ancestors, who carry the blood of both the Pequot and Narragansett Indian are presently members of the Eastern Pequot Indian Tribe.

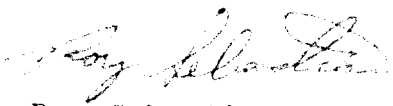
Monthly meetings of the Eastern Pequot Indian Board of Directors are held at the homes of each Board member, which includes the reservation, to discuss tribal concerns such as; lands, funds, the Connecticut Indian Affairs Council, and the Department of Environmental Protection. Annual tribal meetings are held on the reservation the last Sunday of July to elect tribal officers and committees, to discuss relevant issues regarding land, funds, the Connecticut Indian Affairs Council, and the Department of Environmental Protection; and to celebrate cultural traditions of tribal prayers, music and dancing, archery, hunting and fishing. Following the annual meeting special tribal meetings are planned throughout the seasons. The Eastern Pequot Indian Tribe is governed by the By-Laws of the tribe. Tribal decisions are made by voting and petition.

- *(Exhibit E--By-Laws--Eastern Pequot Indians of Connecticut)
- *(Exhibit F--Structure--Eastern Pequot Indians of Connecticut)
- *(Exhibit G--Membership List--Eastern Pequot Indians of Connecticut)

We, the Eastern Pequot Indians of Connecticut, request your full support in our struggle to become recognized. We will continue to promote and advocate a better understanding of the Eastern Pequot Indians and will preserve our ancient heritage, culture, and traditions.

Sincerely,

Board of Directors:
Roy Sebastian, President
William O. Sebastian, Vice-President
Katherine Sebastian, Secretary
Donald Sebastian, Treasurer
Lawrence Sebastian
Eleanor Manson
Doris Cook
James Jones Jr.
Arthur Sebastian

Board of Directors
Eastern Pequot Indians
of Connecticut

Roy Sebastian, President