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ASSISTANT SECRETARY – INDIAN AFFAIRS PROPOSES TO ACKNOWLEDGE THE PAMUNKEY INDIAN TRIBE

January 17, 2014

We have been working towards this point for decades, and are very pleased to have received a positive preliminary determination. We look forward to a continuing government-to-government relationship with the United States.

The Pamunkey Chief and Tribal Council

Today, after years of research and preparation culminating on October 14, 2010 in the filing of a fully documented petition for federal acknowledgment with the Assistant Secretary – Indian Affairs (AS-IA), U.S. Department of the Interior, the AS-IA published a Proposed Finding to Acknowledge the Pamunkey Indian Tribe as a federally recognized Indian tribe on January 17, 2014.

The Pamunkey Indian Tribe, located on the Pamunkey Indian Reservation, Virginia, has a rich and well-documented history. In the course of collecting evidence for the federal acknowledgment petition, researchers compiled thousands of documents recording the Tribe's existence and enduring presence from the period of first European contact to the present. These documents comprise numerous colonial documents, official government censuses, correspondence between the Pamunkey Indian Tribe and officials of the Commonwealth and U.S. governments, numerous newspaper stories, church and school records, books by prominent scholars, popular authors, and federal officials, memoirs and much more. Because of these rich resources, continuous and detailed genealogies have been created for the Pamunkey Tribal members. Moreover, this documentation demonstrates the continuity of the Tribe as a distinct political and cultural group since well before the advent of the United States.

The Pamunkey Indian Tribe played a vital role in the Europeans' first contact with the New World. Documents have been preserved in the archives of the United States and England that clearly show the continual existence of the Pamunkey Indian Tribe as an independent

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sovereign since the first visit of Captain John Smith in 1607, when the English settled Jamestown. The Pamunkey still honor the Treaty relationship forged between the Tribe and Great Britain in 1646, and reasserted through the Treaty of Middle Plantation in 1677. One expression of the perseverance of this treaty relationship, performed as recently as November 2013, is the annual tribute ceremony where deer and other wild game are presented to the Governor of Virginia by the Pamunkey Chief and members of the Tribal Council in Richmond, Virginia. The continuity of the Tribe's community and political authority has helped the Tribe preserve its cultural traditions and a tight-knit community through nearly four centuries. Federal acknowledgment will serve to strengthen these bonds for the future.

For any questions, please contact Kevin Brown, Chief, Pamunkey Indian Tribe, 804.512.3363 or the Tribe's legal counsel: Mark C. Tilden, Tilden McCoy + Dilweg LLP at mctilden@tildenmccoy.com, 303.818.0310 or 2500 30th Street, Suite 207, Boulder, Colorado 80301 or David Gover, Native American Rights Fund at dgover@narf.org, 303.447.8760 or 1506 Broadway, Boulder, Colorado 80302.
