



California Native American Heritage Commission Special Commission Meeting Minutes Open Session

Meeting Date: December 11, 2025

Meeting Time: 9:10 am - 10:37 am

Meeting Location: Graton Resort and Casino, 288 Golf Course Drive West,
Rohnert Park, CA 94928

Room: The Event

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT

Reginald Pagaling, *Chairperson*
Buffy McQuillen, *Vice-Chairperson*
Isaac Bojorquez, *Secretary*
Wayne Nelson, *Parliamentarian*
Bennae Calac
Stanley Rodriguez

STAFF PRESENT

Andrew Alejandre, *Executive Secretary*
Michelle Carr, *Chief Counsel*
Mario Pallari, *Staff Counsel*
Ezra Lintner, *Staff Counsel*
Conner Mulligan, *Staff Services Manager I*

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT

Sara Dutschke

CALL TO ORDER

1. Chairperson Pagaling called the special meeting to order at 9:10 am.
2. Roll call – a quorum was established.
3. The Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) Commissioners and staff were introduced.
4. Lorelle Ross, Vice-Chairperson of the Federated Indians of Graton Rancheria, led the Traditional Opening.

ACTION

1. Approval of Meeting Minutes
 - a. October 10, 2025 – Open Session

Commission Vote: Approve October 10, 2025, Open Session minutes.

Motion: Commissioner Calac

Second: Commissioner Rodriguez

Aye: 5; **Nay:** 0; **Abstained:** Secretary Bojorquez

Motion carried.

b. October 10, 2025 – Closed Session

Commission Vote: Approve October 10, 2025, Closed Session minutes.

Motion: Commissioner Calac

Second: Commissioner Nelson

Aye: 5; **Nay:** 0; **Abstained:** Secretary Bojorquez

Motion carried.

2. Adoption of Modified California Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (CalNAGPRA) Mediation and Dispute Resolution Regulations

Chief Counsel Carr stated that NAHC staff have made changes to the draft regulations as identified by the Office of Administrative Law (OAL) and is now requesting that the Commission approve this new draft and notice them to the public for a 15-day comment period. The goal is to submit to OAL for approval prior to January 31st, 2026, which is our one-year deadline to complete these regulations.

Secretary Bojorquez asked Chief Counsel Carr regarding the 15-day comment period, and why it wasn't a normal 30-day comment period. Chief Counsel Carr responded that the 15-day comment period is prescribed by the Administrative Procedure Act (APA) and is open to all the public, not just tribes. If a public hearing is requested within that 15-day period, the time would be extended.

Vice-Chairperson McQuillen requested that Chief Counsel Carr give an overview of the development process that the CalNAGPRA Mediation and Dispute Resolution Regulations have gone through, including the periods of time they underwent tribal comment and consultation. Chief Counsel Carr complied and gave an overview as requested.

Commission Vote: Adopt as drafted the CalNAGPRA Mediation and Dispute Resolution Regulations, authorize Chief Counsel to make any required non-substantive edits identified by the OAL, and to notice the revised language for a 15-day public comment period.

Motion: Commissioner Calac

Second: Commissioner Nelson

Aye: 6; **Nay:** 0; **Abstained:** 0

Motion carried.

3. Commission to consider extending the tribal comment and consultation period for the revised draft Contact List Regulations for 45 days.

Commission Vote: Extend the tribal comment and consultation period for the revised draft Contact List Regulations for 45 days.

Motion: Commissioner Nelson

Second: Commissioner Bojorquez

Aye: 6; **Nay:** 0; **Abstained:** 0

Motion carried.

Vice-Chairperson McQuillen, Chairperson Pagaling, Secretary Bojorquez, and Chief Counsel Carr had a discussion about the length of the comment and consultation period and the Commission's ability to respond to those comments by the January 2026 Commission meeting.

Public Comment: Gregg Castro, Council Elder, Salinan T'rowt'raahl, requested the 45-day extension be approved. He stated that it would give their tribe the time to put together cogent reasonable documents to submit as comments to these regulations.

John Blunt, Councilman, Gabrielino/Tongva Nation, disagreed with the current draft regulations and his tribe would be negatively impacted if they were to remain written as they are now. He urged the Commission to reconsider the removal of non-federally recognized tribes from the contact list and contact list regulations. He requested that the 45-day extension be approved and his tribe's request for a one-on-one consultation regarding the draft regulations.

Sandone Goad, Chairwoman, Gabrielino/Tongva Nation, supported the 45-day extension and requested that her tribe's request for a one-on-one consultation be approved.

Starry Insixiengmay, Sacred Places Institute for Indigenous Peoples, stood in solidarity with those who requested the 45-day comment period extension.

Claire Cummings, Attorney, Winnemem Wintu Tribe, asked that the Commission describe clearly and with evidence the problem that you are trying to solve within the regulations. She supported the 45-day extension and requested a public hearing. But mostly asked on behalf of the unrecognized tribes, please carefully consider what you are doing and give them plenty of time to address these issues.

Steven Hutchason, Tribal Historic Preservation Officer, Wilton Rancheria, wanted to extend an invitation to the Commission and staff to the Wilton Reservation to go over the regulations. He supported the extension of the comment period.

Maureen Geary, Attorney, Federated Indians of Graton Rancheria, stated that the tribe supports the extension of 45-days.

Roman Rain Tree, Tribal Member, Traditional Choinumni Tribe – East of the Kings River, stated that his tribe is in clear opposition to the changes in the proposed draft Contact List Regulations. He stated many reasons why he and his tribe oppose the current draft and requested an extension of the comment period through January 2026. He requested a public hearing in the central valley, preferably on non-federally recognized land where a concentration of non-federally recognized tribes reside and where access barriers are greatest. He requested that the regulations be written to protect the heritage of all California Native Nations.

Ed Ketchum, Chairman, Amah Mutsun Tribal Band, stated that the way that the current draft is written will take away the voices of unrecognized tribes. Very few unrecognized tribes will be able to go through this process, and it would take away their ability to protect those who are buried. He stated that there is nothing in this procedure that mentions the MLD procedure or how to process them in the future.

Dean Hoaglin, Tribal Council Member, Coast Miwok Tribal Council of Marin, mentioned that his tribe is not federally recognized. The current draft of these regulations is written as a form of erasure of his people and of unrecognized voices. He is of the understanding that the NAHC was founded to protect and recognize all California Native Peoples and urges the Commission to consider what their ancestors would say about what is taking place.

Vice-Chairperson McQuillen gave a directive to NAHC staff to put together a draft of the response to comments received by the January 16, 2026, Commission meeting. Vice-Chairperson McQuillen gave a second directive to provide, a list of tribes that have requested consultation, the dates that they were requested, and the dates that they were consulted. This is to be provided by the January meeting as well. Chief Counsel Carr stated that she could provide the list to the public if that was requested because she does keep track of all that information for her internal use. Chairperson Pagaling and Secretary Bojorquez agreed that providing that information would be helpful for transparency. Vice-Chairperson McQuillen and

Chief Counsel Carr discussed separating non-tribal comments from tribal comments during the pre-rule making process.

Chairperson Pagaling mentioned that a future meeting be held in Central California to comply with that request heard today. Chief Counsel Carr stated that on the January Commission Meeting agenda is an item to discuss dates and locations for the rest of 2026. Staff will investigate possible dates and locations prior to the meeting. Chairperson Pagaling and Vice-Chairperson McQuillen made statements about facility challenges and financial restraints.

PUBLIC COMMENT

1. Vincent Mondragon, Councilmember, Amah Mutsun Tribal Band, reminded the Commission of the hardships that their people have had to endure in this country. He stated that there is not a fair and equitable way for tribes to be recognized by the federal standard. He is of the understanding that the NAHC was going to support all tribal people whether they are federally recognized or not. He reminded the Commission of the NAHC's mission statement. He urged the Commission to support their identity, culture, and their right to exist.
2. Josh Gravier, Tribal Administrator, Koi Nation, gave an overview of the purpose of the Contact List Regulations and how this current draft has the potential to undermine tribal sovereignty. He stated that the regulations unnecessarily expose sensitive and confidential information to the public which is contrary to the legislature's explicit direction to protect the confidentiality of tribal and cultural information. The regulations unnecessarily politicize the contact list and could create conflicts between California Native American tribes over consultation areas by injecting political, economic, or other considerations which are not related to protecting the tribal cultural resources and ancestors into the NAHC process. He stated that he understood that the NAHC was formed to assist tribes, not to create another hurdle or barrier.

ADJOURNMENT

Commission Vote: Adjourn the December 11, 2025, Commission Meeting.

Motion: Commissioner Calac

Second: Commissioner Nelson

Aye 6; Nay 0; Abstained 0

Motion carried.

Meeting adjourned at 10:37 am.

Respectfully submitted and approved on behalf of the Native American Heritage Commission.

Reginald Pagaling, *Chairperson*

Isaac Bojorquez, *Secretary*