



United South and Eastern Tribes, Inc.

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February 23, 2016

Transmitted via email to:
Stephanie.Toothman@nps.gov

Stephanie Toothman
Keeper of the National Register
National Park Service
National Register of Historic Places
1849 C Street, NW (MS 2280)
Washington, DC 20240

Dear Ms. Toothman,

On behalf of United South and Eastern Tribes Sovereignty Protection Fund (USET SPF), we write in solidarity with our southwestern relations to offer our strong support for the nomination of the Chich'il Bildagoteel Historic District as a historic property eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places. This important place includes ceremonial places of the highest significance to Apaches, as well as places and resources of paramount importance to traditional Apache life.

USET SPF is an inter-tribal organization representing 26 federally recognized Tribes from Texas across to Florida and up to Maine¹. While the practice of spiritual and ceremonial traditions and beliefs varies significantly among USET SPF Tribes and the 567 Tribal Nations of the United States, our spirituality is overwhelmingly place-based. From the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians' Nanih Waiyah mounds to the ceremonial stone landscapes of New England, each USET SPF Tribe has specific places and locations that we consider sacred. As our federal partner in this unique government-to-government relationship, the United States possesses a trust responsibility and moral obligation of the highest order to us as the original and free sovereign nations that predate it by thousands of years; this includes protection of our sacred sites.

For American Indian Tribal Nations today, traditional cultural places are not just relics of the past; rather, they are living places bursting with a vibrant history, energy, and divine spiritual synergies. Traditional cultural properties are places that represent more than simply beautiful landscapes or archeological sites to be scientifically studied. Traditional cultural places connect present generations to past ancestors through the continuation of stories, histories, myths, and legends and living traditions carried on by Native Americans today.

The Chich'il Bildagoteel Historic District is such a place. Chich'il Bildagoteel Historic District has major significance in yielding important information in prehistory and history for Apaches and other American Indian Tribal Nations in the Southwest. Hopi, Yavapai, Pima, Tohono O'odham and other Tribal Nations have known prehistorical and cultural ties to Chich'il Bildagoteel Historic District.

¹ USET member Tribes include: Alabama-Coushatta Tribe of Texas (TX), Aroostook Band of Micmac Indians (ME), Catawba Indian Nation (SC), Cayuga Nation (NY), Chitimacha Tribe of Louisiana (LA), Coushatta Tribe of Louisiana (LA), Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians (NC), Houlton Band of Maliseet Indians (ME), Jena Band of Choctaw Indians (LA), Mashantucket Pequot Indian Tribe (CT), Mashpee Wampanoag Tribe (MA), Miccosukee Tribe of Indians of Florida (FL), Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians (MS), Mohegan Tribe of Indians of Connecticut (CT), Narragansett Indian Tribe (RI), Oneida Indian Nation (NY), Passamaquoddy Tribe at Indian Township (ME), Passamaquoddy Tribe at Pleasant Point (ME), Penobscot Indian Nation (ME), Poarch Band of Creek Indians (AL), Saint Regis Mohawk Tribe (NY), Seminole Tribe of Florida (FL), Seneca Nation of Indians (NY), Shinnecock Indian Nation (NY), Tunica-Biloxi Tribe of Louisiana (LA), and the Wampanoag Tribe of Gay Head (Aquinnah) (MA).

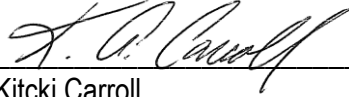
This place not only meets all the federal criteria for listing on the National Register, but also meets Tribal criteria for a traditional cultural property and sacred site. We ask that you list this site on the National Register.

Thank you for your continued work in helping to protect our sacred sites, which are so vital to the continuance of our Tribal traditional ways of life.

Sincerely,



Brian Patterson
President



Kitcki Carroll
Executive Director

CC: USET member Tribes
Wanda James, USET Deputy Director
Chairman Terry Rambler, San Carlos Apache Tribe

“Because there is strength in Unity”