

Open Letter to Our Pit River Brothers & Sisters

General Election
August 19, 2006
10 AM VFW Hall

Madesi Band
Election
September 16 - 1 PM
Community Room

**Vote for leaders who will work for the whole Tribe.
Vote for leaders who denounce disenrollment.
Vote for leaders who respect the Constitution and Ordinances.
Vote for leaders who respect your vote on descendency from Pit River
Indian ancestors.**

A small group within the Madesi Band is now trying to disenroll over 200 members, up from 100 last year. Any one who disagrees with them, or is a threat to their power gets on the 'challenge' list. They twist the meaning of the Constitution and your legal vote to keep the words "...or descendant thereof," in the Constitution. They say you must be a descendant of 'enrolled parents' and any break in the chain is grounds for disenrollment. There was a time in all of our histories when our ancestors were not 'enrolled.' Enrollment records have been burned and lost over the years. We are all at risk. Today it is the Orr, Shadley and Taylor families—tomorrow it could be your family. Greed begets greed. Casinos bring out the best in the Tribe, and the worst in some wanna-be leaders.

Disenrollment is only part of the problem. This small group is trying to take over the Tribe! We don't know all the reasons, maybe casino profits, maybe pending land settlements, maybe deals with land developers—events the last few days prove that something is going on without the full knowledge of the Tribe!

Why are we fighting? Wild rumors have been spread and they are all lies.

We do not want to 'take over the Tribe' - we are pleading that all members help prevent any one family or group from doing that!

We do NOT want to drain your healthcare and education dollars. The health benefits for our few Elders are provided by HIS in Portland or Warm Springs—this does NOT take away from your care.

Education benefits for a few of our young people come directly through grants from the federal government—we do NOT take away any resources from the Pit River people.

And we do NOT want to rob your casino dollars.

We DO want to protect our heritage for our children and grandchildren and beyond. We want a strong Tribe that is respected by others and by the federal government.

"As long as those politicians with the largest families of voting age are elected, not because of their qualifications but because of their family support, unqualified leaders will continue to rule." Tim Gaigo, President of the Native American Journalists Foundation, Inc., Lakota Times, 7/27/06



Our full blood Madesi Band Pit River Indian ancestor is Chu-Tit-Whe known as Susan Suthermire (left), a cousin to Hulsey Bill, and was born, lived, died and is buried along Hagen Flat Road in Big Bend. Her daughters, Susan and Rosa, form the roots of our family tree.

We urge you to vote for leaders who respect the Constitution, Ordinances and the votes of the Members. This small group within the Madesi Band has ignored the Ordinances, twisted the Constitution and your votes, and spread rumors and lies to try and gain more power. Do you want leaders like that?

It is very important that all Pit River Tribe Members come and vote in the general and Band elections. The strength of the Tribe is in our numbers—the larger the better. Many threats face us from outside and we must be strong. The actions of this small family within the Madesi Band are tearing us apart. You can put a stop to it and begin rebuilding the power and unity of the Tribe by coming to vote on Saturday, August 19th, 10 AM, VFW Hall in Burney and then come to the Band elections!

We are turning to you, the Tribe, to protect our traditional and civil rights, and to do it in a good way, not by loud voices, threatening or ignoring the rules we have all adopted. We are doing this for our children and our children's children.

Visit www.pitriverpeople.org on the web for more information and our family trees.

Respectfully, The Orr, Shadley and Taylor families and our children