

Native American Rights Fund

Indigenous Peoples' Rights

<https://www.narf.org/cases/pamunkey-tribe-virginia/>

Campaign and Advocacy

NARF represented the Pamunkey Indian Tribe in their successful federal recognition petition from 1988 to 2016.

Status: Archived

In an historic day for the Pamunkey Indian Tribe, in July 2015, after decades of research and participation in the federal acknowledgment regulatory process, the Assistant Secretary Indian Affairs, U.S. Department of the Interior published a Final Determination acknowledging that the Tribe exists as an Indian tribe within the meaning of Federal law.

A request for reconsideration, however, was filed on October 6, 2015, with the Indian Board of Indian Appeals (IBIA), an independent appellate review body within the Departments Office of Hearings and Appeals. In January 2016, the Pamunkey Indian Tribes Final Determination became effective as a result of the IBIA's final dismissal of the request for reconsideration. The IBIA ruled that Stand Up for California, an organization that focuses on gambling issues affecting California, failed to show that it is an interested party to the Final Determination within the meaning of the Federal acknowledgment regulations, and was therefore not entitled to seek reconsideration of the Final Determination.

The Pamunkey Indian Tribe is the only tribe located in Virginia to have filed a fully documented recognition petition. Established no later than 1646, the Tribes Reservation is located next to the Pamunkey River, and adjacent to King William County. The Reservation comprises approximately 1,200 acres and is the oldest inhabited Indian reservation in America. NARF represented the Tribe in this effort from 1988 to 2016.

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