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December 6, 2023

BY E-MAIL ONLY  
Executive Secretary  
U.S. Board on Geographic Names  
12201 Sunrise Valley Drive (MS 523)  
Reston, Virginia 20192-0523  
Sent to: [BGNEEXEC@usgs.gov](mailto:BGNEEXEC@usgs.gov)

Citizens for Healing  
3770 Saderfund Street  
Kelseyville, CA 95451

Re: Citizens for Healing—Request to Change Name of Kelseyville in the County of Lake, CA (CA\_KONOCTI)

Dear Sir/Madam:

In mid-November, it came to the attention of the Habematolel Pomo of Upper Lake, a federally recognized Indian tribe (the “Habematolel” or the “Tribe”), that the United States Board on Geographic Names (the “BGN”) has received a request/proposal from the Citizens of Healing to rename Kelseyville in northern Lake County, CA. The Habematolel Pomo of Upper Lake Tribe supports the requested name change, referenced in the supporting documents / historical writings found at <https://citizensforhealing.org/>

Our Tribe reserves the right to respond, support, or oppose such a request/proposal and with the Tribe’s further review of such information. Please consider this letter as a form of the Tribe’s support that the BGN consider and proceed with the proposed name change. The unique name of Konocti honors our beautiful mountain and Native people. It evokes images of nature, art, music, spirituality, and recreation. The town of Kelseyville was named after Andrew Kelsey. However, historic records reveal that this same man and his brothers enslaved, brutalized, raped, starved, and murdered many local Natives and Tribal ancestors.

The name Kelsey and the history behind it, is offensive to Natives, other local tribes, and to many residents throughout the County. Changing the name to ‘Konocti’ is a gesture to acknowledge the wrongs done to the original inhabitants of Lake County. Konocti is a volcanic mountain that stands 3,000 feet above Clear Lake, named by the East Lake Tribe of Elem, the oldest existing tribe. Giving the town a new name will create a more healing environment for the whole county and will contribute positively to our community’s growth.

We encourage the BGN’s *obligation* to engage in meaningful consultation and coordination with federally recognized Indian tribes on matters of this nature. See U.S. Bd. on Geographic Names, “Principles, Policies, and Procedures” App. J (ver. 2.3 Dec. 2016).

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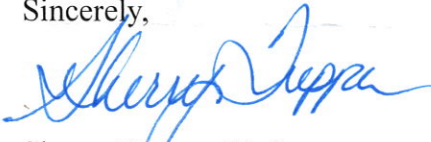
Fortunately, our Tribe was notified of this matter by Citizens of Healing, Lake County, California, for which our tribal leadership team is very grateful.

In view of the importance of this matter, the Tribe wants to share that in September 2022 the BGN officially adopted the Habematolel name for two geographic features—the valley or flat and a stream—within the Mendocino National Forest. Both features are within our original lands, as confirmed by both tribal cultural resources and the archaeological record. This was an entirely appropriate action, particularly in view of the BGN’s decision to replace longstanding names on each of the features that were derogatory and offensive to Indian people with the name of the Indian tribe and the people who first owned and inhabited the land. The BGN’s actions naming Habematolel Valley and Habematolel Creek last year represented a recognition of our people, whose ownership and presence on these lands for thousands of years was brutally erased in the mid-19th century. The decision was appropriate and was supported not only by our Tribe, but by the California Department of Natural Resources, and it was in keeping with Secretarial Order No. 3404.

With only good reasons set forth by the Citizens of Healing group and with the support of the Habematolel Pomo of Upper Lake Tribe can justify the BGN to consider this change as it aligns with the cultural and historical significance of the region but also holds the potential to enhance the identity and recognition of the Native community.

In closing, Konocti carries a rich heritage and resonates with the natural beauty and significance of the area. Embracing this name change will not only foster a sense of pride among the residents but also contribute to a stronger community character. Thank you for your attention and consideration to this matter,

Sincerely,



Sherry Treppa, Chairperson  
Habematolel Pomo of Upper Lake

HM/

cc: Executive Council, Habematolel Pomo of Upper Lake, Upper Lake, California;  
[ec@hpultribe-nsn.gov](mailto:ec@hpultribe-nsn.gov)  
Robert Geary, Cultural Resources Administrator/Tribal Historic Preservation Officer,  
Habematolel Pomo of Upper Lake; [rgeary@hpultribe-nsn.gov](mailto:rgeary@hpultribe-nsn.gov)