

CA_KONOCTI_TRIBAL submitted by Applicant Lorna Sue Sides / C4H

Tribal Support

I have contacted each tribe in Lake County for their approval to change the name of the town Kelseyville to the name of Konocti and the 7 tribes are unanimously in favor of the name change to Konocti.

Ronald Montez Sr
Tribal Historic Preservation Officer (THPO)
The Big Valley Band of Pomo Indians
(email 09/09/21)

Giving the town of Kelseyville a new name has strong support from tribal members:

The late Thomas Leon Brown, an elder of Elem Modun, attended our early meetings, and suggested the name *Citizens for Healing* for the group.

Habematolel and Elem hosted our meetings. Robinson Ranchera hosted a meeting of the Visioning Forum.

Ron Montez, THPO for Big Valley Band of Pomos (The Tribe nearest Kelseyville), participated in our working groups, and brought several elders from local tribes to speak at our meeting at Habematolel. They shared stories from their great-grandparents of the horrific history of Andy Kelsey and the impact it still has on their lives.

Robert Geary (THPO for Elem) assisted us by explaining the various names for Konocti (which vary according to the location from which it is viewed), and that names belong to particular tribes, whose permission must be sought before using one.

Three tribal members participate in the Lake County Visioning Forum, at which Historic Names was raised as an issue.

Tribal Testimony at our meeting at the Tribal Hall of the Habematolel.

Excerpt from: [The Language of Silence by Jeanine Pfeiffer](#)

Choosing to name a town after a criminal, and continuing to retain the name despite public outcry, comes at a moral cost.

Attempts to rename Kelseyville as “Konocti,” a name honoring the sacred mountain, Mt. Konocti, overlooking Clear Lake, are gaining traction, as part of any effort led by a local group, Citizens for Healing. In association with a series of monthly meetings held around Clear Lake, on Sunday, August 14th, 2022 a panel discussion headed by Big Valley Band of Pomo Indians elder and THPO Director Ron Montez, Sr. provided hours of testimony by Natives of the *pervasive, multigenerational trauma elicited by the town’s name*.

“It’s still an open wound that’s not been healed. We are a hurting people. We’ve wanted to change the name way before [anyone non-Native] thought of it,” explained Ron.

Jesse Gonzalez (Scotts Valley tribe), a descendant of Shuk, a chief who witnessed the Bloody Island massacre, says he doesn’t understand why a town would choose such a name. “I’m hoping we don’t have to plead our case – why would anyone want to back the name of a person who has committed such atrocities?” he asked during the discussion. “It’s not in the past for us; it’s not been swept under the rug for us – we’ve always known. *I’ve known since I was ten years old.*“

Clayton Duncan, the great-great-grandson of a little girl who survived the massacre by hiding underwater in the tule reeds (while using a reed as a makeshift snorkel), after listing a number of federal policies (e.g., the 1830 [Indian Removal Act](#), the 1887 [Dawes Act](#),) depriving Natives of homelands, identities, and rights, described the retention of the Kelsey name as “honoring a man who stole the souls of little girls.”

My [Jennine's] adopted family, the Tado (a Kempo Manggarai clan) practice an apology ritual. I’ve been both the initiator and recipient of these rituals, whereby a symbolic gift and ritual speech are exchanged in order to repair a broken relationship. A similar ritual exists here – Ron Montez emphasized that when local authorities step forward to acknowledge history of atrocities and present an appropriate gift (such as the renaming of Kelseyville to Konocti) to be received ritually by tribal elders, reparations and reconciliation can begin in Lake County.

[Dr Pfeiffer also spoke at the meeting.]

On August 14, 2022 Elders and members from four different tribes attended the meeting held in the Tribal Hall of the Habematolel. They stood up, one by one, and spoke from their hearts, sharing stories they'd heard from their grandparents and great-grandparents. They talked about the difficulties growing up in Lake County. They spoke about the inter-generational trauma they still endure that is associated with the horrific history of Andrew Kelsey. Ron Montez, THPO for Big Valley, said “it wasn't really that long ago, it's still fresh in people's minds.” And he felt that changing the name of the town would be a “gift to all the tribes.” Only one person opposing the change got up to speak that day - he addressed the importance of education regarding our local history.

[Dallas Cook]

A descendant of Chief Augustine said "The survivors are hurt and crying." His 83 year old grandmother was terrified by a prospective move to Kelseyville: "They are going to get wind of me" she cried.

Another said that the name is like "a wound infected for years" and that we must "heal it in order to move forward".

"All the tribes agree: Do the right thing"

[Alan Fletcher]