

February 17, 2015

Dear Supervisor Bosworth,

The attached statement from the Spirit of the Mountain Runners and Apache Stronghold explains why we have begun an encampment at Chich'il Bildagoteel (Oak Flat) and what we expect that the US Forest Service, on behalf of the United States, will do to correct the grievous error perpetrated by the United States Congress in the passage of section 3003 (Oak Flat land exchange) of the National Defense Authorization Act.

We and our allies will work tirelessly for the repeal of this section. In the meantime, we expect that the US Forest Service will do nothing to change the character of Chich'il Bildagoteel, including the granting of permits involving Chich'il Bildagoteel.

We will insure, to the extent possible, that our encampment will be respectful to all, peaceful, and in keeping with the religious character of the holy ground now in place representing the body of what is sacred at Oak Flat.

We expect that the US Forest Service will help us to protect the holy ground (the four crosses and related ground) from removal and vandalism. We fear that the removal or destruction of the four crosses will invoke an uncontrollable and tragic reaction similar to the reaction when the US Government, in August of 1881, interfered with an Apache holy ground at Cibicue, Arizona.

We hope that the US Forest Service will work with us to ensure that the holy ground remains undisturbed and that we will be free to worship at, and protect, the four crosses as our religion dictates.

We understand that it will take some time for you to respond to the statement and more time for an agreement for the protection of Chich'il Bildagoteel to be worked out between the Apache people (and others that hold Oak Flat sacred) and the United States government. We will continue our encampment until we are ensured that Chich'il Bildagoteel will be protected and expect that the US Forest Service will protect the right of our freedom of religion.

Sincerely,

Naelyn Pike *NP*

Carrie Reede *CR*

Wendsler Nosie, Sr. *WNS*

CC:

Regional Forester, Cal Joyner

Forest Service Chief, Tom Tidwell

USDA Undersecretary, Robert Bonnie

USDA Secretary Vilsack

Interior Secretary Jewell