United States Department of the Interior

BUREAU OF INDIAN AFFAIRS
PACIFIC REGIONAL OFFICE
2800 Cottage Way, Room W-2820
Sacramento, CA 95825

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT (FONSI)

TOLOWA DEE-NI' NATION FEE-TO-TRUST PROJECT/ EA

Approved: Date:

RYAN HUNTER

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Date: 2025.11.13 13:25:55 -08'00'

Acting Regional Director
Bureau of Indian Affairs, Pacific Region

SUMMARY:

The Tolowa Dee-Ni' Nation (Tribe) submitted a request to the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) to transfer seven parcels (APNs 102-070-17, 102-070-13, 102-070-08, 102-070-25, 102-160-23, 102-010-41, and 102-010-40) (project site) into federal trust on behalf of the Tribe to be used for the development of visitor and recreational vehicle parking (50 automobile stalls and 17 recreational vehicle stalls), tribal residential housing (6 single-family units) and a private road, a cultural center (5,330 square feet), and a cultural preserve (Proposed Action). The project site is approximately 22.3 acres and is located in Smith River, Del Norte County. Based upon the entire administrative record including analysis in a September 2025 EA, comments received on the EA, and mitigation imposed, the BIA makes a finding of no significant impact (FONSI) for the Proposed Action. This finding constitutes a determination that the Proposed Action is not a Federal action significantly affecting the quality of the human environment. Therefore, in accordance with Section 102(2)(c) of the National Environmental Policy Act, 42 U.S.C § 4321 et seq., an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) is not required.

PURPOSE AND NEED:

The purpose of the Proposed Action is to facilitate Tribal self-determination, self-sufficiency, and housing development as well as a diversified economic land uses. Additional details regarding the purpose and need can be found in EA Section 1.3.

ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED:

Three alternatives are analyzed in the EA: the Proposed Action, a Reduced Intensity Alternative, and a No Action Alternative. The Proposed Action is summarized above and includes the fee-to-trust transfer of seven parcels of land totaling approximately 22.3 acres. Under the Reduced Intensity Alternative, the Tribe would construct a reduced number of parking spaces, only two tribal residences, and a smaller cultural center. Under the No Action Alternative, no federal actions would occur, and the Tribe would not construct on the Project Site for the foreseeable future. Additional details regarding the Proposed Action and Alternatives can be found in EA Section 2.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS:

Potential impacts to land resources, water resources; air quality; biological resources; cultural resources; transportation; land use and agriculture; public services; noise; hazardous materials; and visual resources were evaluated in the EA, with the following conclusions for the Proposed Action[1] (see EA Sections 3, 4, and 5 for detailed analysis and for specific mitigation measures):

Land Resources

Land resources impacts could occur during the construction and operation of the project. No significant land resources impacts would occur.

[1] The No Action Alternative would generally not result in detrimental impacts to the environment, therefore the impacts and mitigation measures detailed here are generally not applicable (see EA for more details). As noted in the EA, the Reduced Intensity Alternative and the No Action Alternative would not meet the purpose and need of the action.

Water Resources
Impacts to water resources would occur during construction and operation of the project. Mitigation measures detailed in EA Section 5.0 would ensure water resource impacts are less than significant.

Air Quality
Impacts to air quality would occur during construction and operation of the project. Mitigation measures detailed in EA Section 5.0 would ensure air quality impacts are less than significant.

Biological Resources
Impacts to biological resources would occur from the development of the project. Mitigation measures detailed in EA Section 5.0 would ensure impacts to biological resources are less than significant.

Cultural Resources
Impacts to cultural resources could occur from the development of the project. Mitigation measures detailed in EA Section 5.0 would ensure impacts to cultural resources are less than significant. In a letter dated 9/15/2025, the BIA initiated consultation from SHPO on a determination of no historic properties affected. SHPO responded on 10/9/2025 with "no objection to" a no adverse effects determination.

Transportation and Circulation
Impacts to transportation and circulation would occur during construction and operation of the project. Mitigation measures detailed in EA Section 5.0 would ensure transportation and circulation impacts are less than significant.

Land Use and Agriculture
Impacts to land use and agriculture would occur during construction and operation of the project. No significant impacts would occur.

Public Services
Impacts to public services would occur from the operation of the project. No significant impacts would occur.

Noise
Noise and vibration impacts would occur during construction and operation of the project. Mitigation measures detailed in EA Section 5.0 would ensure noise impacts are less than significant.

Hazardous Materials
Hazardous materials impacts could occur during construction and operation of the project. No significant impacts would occur.

Visual Resources
Impacts to visual resource would occur from the development of the project. No significant impact would occur.

PUBLIC AVAILABILITY:

A Notice of Availability for the EA and the unsigned FONSI has been provided to agencies, organizations, and interested parties for a period of 30 days.

DETERMINATION:

It has been determined that the proposed Federal action to take approximately 22.3 acres of fee land into federal trust for the purpose of developing development of visitor and recreational vehicle parking, tribal housing and private road, a cultural center, and a cultural preserve does not constitute a major federal action that would significantly affect the quality of the human environment. Therefore, in accordance with Section 102(2)(c) of the National Environmental Policy Act, 42 U.S.C § 4321 et seq., an Environmental Impact Statement is not required. This determination is supported by the findings described in this FONSI and the analysis contained in the entire administrative record, including the September 2025 EA, consultation with the SHPO, and the mitigation imposed. This fulfills the requirements of NEPA as outlined in the Implementation of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (43 CFR 46), and the U.S. Department of the Interior Handbook of National Environmental Policy Act Implementing Procedures (516 DM 1).