



COALITION OF LARGE TRIBES

Blackfeet Nation • Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe • Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation • Confederated Tribes of the Warm Springs Indian Reservation of Oregon • Crow Creek Sioux Tribe • Crow Nation • Eastern Shoshone Tribe • Fort Belknap Indian Community • Mandan, Hidatsa & Arikara Nation • Muscogee (Creek) Nation • Navajo Nation • Northern Arapaho Tribe • Northern Cheyenne Tribe • Oglala Sioux Tribe • Rosebud Sioux Tribe • San Carlos Apache Tribe • Shoshone-Bannock Tribes • Shoshone-Paiute Tribes of the Duck Valley Indian Reservation • Sisseton Wahpeton Sioux Tribe • Spirit Lake Nation • Spokane Tribe • Standing Rock Sioux Tribe • Ute Indian Tribe • Ute Mountain Ute Tribe • Walker River Paiute Tribe

COLT Applauds Federal Court Decision Affirming Due Process for Land-Into-Trust Decisions

October 31, 2025

Agency Village, South Dakota – The Coalition of Large Tribes (COLT)—an intertribal organization representing the interests of the more than 50 tribes with reservations of 100,000 acres or more, encompassing more than 95% of the Indian Country lands and more than half the Native American population—was heartened to see yesterday’s [decision](#) from the U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia vacating the Department of the Interior’s rescission of the gaming eligibility determination for the Scotts Valley Band of Pomo Indians. The fact that the Court ruled that DOI violated Scotts Valley’s Fifth Amendment right to due process by failing to properly consult with the Tribe is significant and underlines the essential need for the Department to properly communicate and consider the rights of tribal nations. Scotts Valley had relied on the Department’s January 2025 decision to take land into trust for the Tribe, and invested millions of dollars in their project in Vallejo, California, only to have the Department unilaterally suspend their gaming eligibility without consultation in late March. The Court’s decision granting summary judgment in favor of Scotts Valley and nullifying DOI’s look-back was a huge win for tribal sovereignty and all land-into-trust efforts.

“COLT strongly supported 2023 land-into-trust amendments because they help large land base tribes achieve our self-determination objectives. We view the right to a permanent homeland as essential for all tribes and that is why COLT has supported Scotts Valley in their land into trust application,” said COLT Chairman J. Garret Renville, Chairman of the Sisseton Wahpeton Oyate of the Lake Traverse Reservation, South Dakota. “COLT believes all tribes are entitled to fairness in the binary land-into-trust process that is between a tribal applicant and the Department of the Interior.”

“COLT appreciates that the Department was in a tough spot early in the Administration, faced with very aggressive lobbying from opposing tribes asking the Secretary to do unconstitutional things,” said O.J. Semans, COLT Executive Director. “We know because COLT faced extraordinary pressure from those same tribes to cease our support for fairness in Scotts Valley’s land-into-trust process, including threatening unrelated philanthropic activity and sending individual misinformation letters to individual COLT leaders and their consultants.”



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“But political interference with the statutory and regulatory duties of the Department of the Interior should never be allowed,” said Chairman Renville. “Once a decision has been made and published in the Federal Register, as was the case for Scotts Valley, any challenges to that decision should rest solely with the courts.”

“The opposing tribes asked Secretary Burgum to act outside the proper judicial review clandestinely, before the Solicitor or the Assistant Secretary of Indian Affairs had been confirmed by the Senate,” said Semans. “Now that Secretary has his expert team in place and confirmed by the Senate, COLT looks forward to seeing the Department’s fair treatment of Scotts Valley as to their land that has been in trust for nearly a year, and their ability to fulfill the purposes for which that land was taken into trust—including housing, governmental offices and economic development, including gaming—the same things all tribes may seek to do with their trust lands.”

Semans continued, “The tribes opposing the land-into-trust applications of the Coquille Tribe, the Koi Nation, and the Scotts Valley Band of Pomo Indians are only doing so because they don’t want competition with their casinos. The richest tribes, who were lucky enough to be first or earlier in time to tremendous gaming opportunities should not be able to pull up the ladder behind them and prevent sister tribes from enjoying the same opportunities or exercising their fundamental right to a tribal homeland. Rather, the United States has trust responsibilities to all tribal nations.”

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