



DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

National Park Service

[NPS-WASO-NAGPRA-NPS0031390; PPWOCRADN0-PCU00RP14.R50000]

Notice of Intent to Repatriate Cultural Items: Tennessee Valley Authority, Knoxville, TN

AGENCY: National Park Service, Interior.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: The Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA), in consultation with the appropriate Indian Tribes or Native Hawaiian organizations, has determined that the cultural items listed in this notice meet the definition of unassociated funerary objects. Lineal descendants or representatives of any Indian Tribe or Native Hawaiian organization not identified in this notice that wish to claim these cultural items should submit a written request to the TVA. If no additional claimants come forward, transfer of control of the cultural items to the lineal descendants, Indian Tribes, or Native Hawaiian organizations stated in this notice may proceed.

DATES: Lineal descendants or representatives of any Indian Tribe or Native Hawaiian organization not identified in this notice that wish to claim these cultural items should submit a written request with information in support of the claim to the TVA at the address in this notice by [INSERT DATE 30 DAYS AFTER PUBLICATION IN THE *FEDERAL REGISTER*].

ADDRESSES: Dr. Thomas O. Maher, Tennessee Valley Authority, 400 West Summit Hill Drive, WT11C, Knoxville, TN 37902-1401, telephone (865) 632-7458, email tomaher@tva.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Notice is here given in accordance with the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA), 25 U.S.C. 3005, of the intent to repatriate cultural items under the control of the Tennessee Valley Authority, Knoxville, TN, that meet the definition of unassociated funerary objects under 25 U.S.C. 3001.

This notice is published as part of the National Park Service's administrative

responsibilities under NAGPRA, 25 U.S.C. 3003(d)(3). The determinations in this notice are the sole responsibility of the museum, institution, or Federal agency that has control of the Native American cultural items. The National Park Service is not responsible for the determinations in this notice.

Consultation

A detailed assessment of the unassociated funerary objects was made by TVA professional staff in consultation with representatives of the Cherokee Nation; Coushatta Tribe of Louisiana; Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians; Shawnee Tribe; The Chickasaw Nation; and The Muscogee (Creek) Nation (hereafter referred to as “The Consulted Tribes”).

History and description of the cultural items

On June 25, 1937, 47 cultural items were removed from burial 15 at 1MS32, the McKee Island site, in Marshall County, AL. The McKee Island site was excavated as part of TVA’s Guntersville Reservoir project by the Alabama Museum of Natural History (AMNH) at the University of Alabama, using labor and funds provided by the Works Progress Administration (WPA). Details regarding these excavations may be found in “*An Archaeological Survey of Guntersville Basin on the Tennessee River in Northern Alabama,*” by William S. Webb and Charles G. Wilder. TVA acquired the site on November 12, 1936. The 47 unassociated funerary objects are sherds of a Mississippi Plain vessel.

Site 1MS32 was a midden-rich village that extended 800 feet along a ridge of the now-inundated McKee Island. Although there are no radiocarbon dates from this site, ceramics recovered from 1MS32 indicate occupations during the Colbert (300 B.C. - A.D. 100), Flint River (A.D. 500 - 1000), and Crow Creek (A.D. 1500 - 1650) phases. Burial 15 is from the Mississippian Crow Creek phase. Chronicles from Spanish explorers of the 16th century and French explorers of the 17th and 18th century indicate the presence of chiefdom-level tribal entities in the southeastern United States that resemble the historic Native American chiefdoms. Linguistic analysis of place names noted by multiple Spanish explorers indicates that Koasati-speaking Muskogean groups inhabited northeastern Alabama. Early maps and research into the historic Native American occupation of northeastern Alabama indicate that the Koasati (as called

by the English) or the Kaskinampo (as called by the French) were found at multiple sites in Jackson and Marshall Counties in the 17th and 18th centuries. Oral history, traditions, and expert opinions of Koasati/Kaskinampo and Muscogee (Creek) descendants indicate that this portion of the Tennessee River valley was their tribal homeland. Oral tradition also indicates that by the middle 1700s, the Koasati/Kaskinampo were leaving the Tennessee River valley and moving south.

Based on the totality of the evidence, TVA has determined that the items from the Mississippian burials at 1MS32 are culturally affiliated with descendants of the Koasati/Kaskinampo. These descendants include the Alabama-Coushatta Tribe of Texas (previously listed as the Alabama-Coushatta Tribes of Texas); Alabama-Quassarte Tribal Town; Coushatta Tribe of Louisiana; and The Muscogee (Creek) Nation.

Determinations made by the Tennessee Valley Authority

Officials of the Tennessee Valley Authority have determined that:

- Pursuant to 25 U.S.C. 3001(3)(B), the 47 cultural items described above are reasonably believed to have been placed with or near individual human remains at the time of death or later as part of the death rite or ceremony and are believed, by a preponderance of the evidence, to have been removed from a specific burial site of a Native American individual.
- Pursuant to 25 U.S.C. 3001(2), these items are culturally affiliated with the Alabama-Coushatta Tribe of Texas (previously listed as the Alabama-Coushatta Tribes of Texas); Alabama-Quassarte Tribal Town; Coushatta Tribe of Louisiana; and The Muscogee (Creek) Nation (hereafter referred to as “The Tribes”).
- Pursuant to 25 U.S.C. 3005(a)(2), repatriation of these cultural items may be to The Tribes.

Additional Requestors and Disposition

Lineal descendants or representatives of any Indian Tribe or Native Hawaiian organization not identified in this notice that wish to claim these cultural items should submit a written request with information in support of the claim to Dr. Thomas O. Maher, Tennessee

Valley Authority, 400 West Summit Hill Drive, WT11C, Knoxville, TN 37902-1401, telephone (865) 632-7458, email *tomaher@tva.gov*, by [INSERT DATE 30 DAYS AFTER PUBLICATION IN THE *FEDERAL REGISTER*]. After that date, if no additional claimants have come forward, transfer of control of the unassociated funerary objects to The Tribes may proceed.

The Tennessee Valley Authority is responsible for notifying The Tribes and The Consulted Tribes that this notice has been published.

Dated: January 14, 2021.

Melanie O'Brien,

Manager, National NAGPRA Program.

[FR Doc. 2021-01898 Filed: 1/27/2021 8:45 am; Publication Date: 1/28/2021]