



**Pokégnek Bodéwadmik**  
POKAGON BAND OF POTAWATOMI



**NOTTAWASEPPI HURON  
BAND OF THE POTAWATOMI**  
A FEDERALLY RECOGNIZED TRIBAL GOVERNMENT



## **Native American Leaders Issue Joint Statement on Decision to Retire Paw Paw Public Schools' Mascot**

MICHIGAN – March 11, 2020 – The Chairpersons of Tribal Nations in Southwest Michigan, including Matthew Wesaw of the Pokagon Band of Potawatomi, Jamie Stuck of the Nottawaseppi Huron Band of Potawatomi, and Bob Peters of the Match-E-Be-Nash-She-Wish Band of Potawatomi, applaud the effort of Superintendent Rick Reo and the decision of the Paw Paw Public Schools' Board of Education to retire its mascot name and imagery at the end of the 2019-2020 school year.

“Today, as we work to rebuild and reestablish our communities, we are bound together by our history, language, culture and traditions. Just as importantly, we strive to support and uphold positive healthy learning environments for our youth and inclusive resilient communities for our Tribal Citizens and their neighbors,” said the Chairpersons. “We want to be a part of the healing and consultation process by providing insight to our culture, traditions and values with a solution-based approach.”

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### **About The Pokagon Band of Potawatomi Indians**

The Pokagon Band of Potawatomi Indians' sovereignty was reaffirmed under legislation signed into law by President Clinton in September of 1994. The Pokagon Band is dedicated to providing community development initiatives such as housing, education, family services, medical care and cultural preservation for its more than 5,700 citizens. The Pokagon Band's ten-county service area includes four counties in Southwestern Michigan and six in Northern Indiana. Its main administrative offices are located in Dowagiac, Mich., with a satellite office in South Bend, Ind. In 2007, it opened Four Winds Casino Resort in New Buffalo, Mich., followed by Four Winds Hartford in 2011, Four Winds Dowagiac in 2013 and Four Winds South Bend in January 2018. The Pokagon Band operates a variety of businesses via Mno-Bmadsen, its non-gaming investment enterprise. More information is available at [www.pokagonband-nsn.gov](http://www.pokagonband-nsn.gov), [www.fourwindscasino.com](http://www.fourwindscasino.com) and [www.mno-bmadsen.com](http://www.mno-bmadsen.com).

### **About The Nottawaseppi Huron Band of the Potawatomi**

NHBP, a federally recognized Tribal government with more than 1,500 enrolled Tribal Members, gained federal recognition December 19, 1995. The Tribe's main offices are located at the Pine Creek Indian Reservation near Athens, Michigan, and in Grand Rapids, Michigan. NHBP provides benefits, programs and services to Tribal Members through various Tribal government departments, as well as a Tribal Police Department, Tribal Court and Gaming Commission.

NHBP's economic development entities include FireKeepers Casino Hotel (FKCH), a Vegas-style casino, and Waséyabek Development Company, LLC (WDC), which focuses on the pursuit of non-gaming, economic diversification opportunities.

Under the Tribal-State Gaming Compact, NHBP distributes a percentage of its annual slot machine revenue from FKCH to both the State of Michigan and to the Local Revenue Sharing Board (LRSB). The Native American Heritage Fund, established in 2016, serves to provide resources to improve curricula and educational resources related to Michigan Indian history, as well as to fund initiatives that promote mutual respect and cooperation between local communities and Michigan's federally recognized Tribes.

For more information visit: [www.nhbpi.com](http://www.nhbpi.com)

#### **About Gun Lake Tribe**

The Match-E-Be-Nash-She-Wish Band of Pottawatomi Indians (Gun Lake Tribe) has a rich history in West Michigan and a close connection to the land. The Bradley Indian Mission, located near Wayland, is the historic residential and cultural center point of the tribal community. The Tribe's ancestors, and political predecessors, signed treaties with the United States government dating back to 1795. The Tribe was re-affirmed to federal recognition in 1999. For more information about the Tribe visit <https://gunlaketribe-nsn.gov/>

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