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Contact: Rachel Cromer
FortSillApacheNM@gmail.com
505-450-4629

**Fort Sill Apache Tribe Sues New Mexico Governor Susana Martinez,
Indian Affairs Department in New Mexico Supreme Court**
Lawsuit Filed as Tribe is Treated Unfairly by the State

Akela, New Mexico (December 18, 2013) —Tuesday, the Fort Sill Apache Tribe (FSA) filed a lawsuit against Governor Susana Martinez and her administration in the New Mexico Supreme Court asserting that the Governor is violating a state statute in failing to recognize FSA as a New Mexico tribe. The lawsuit alleges that the Governor and her administration have ignored the fact that FSA is a federally recognized tribe located in southwestern New Mexico and that by failing to recognize the Tribe, are discriminating against the Tribe by excluding it from consultations with other tribes, barring it from the State's annual State-Tribal summit, and by refusing to include it on a list of recognized New Mexico tribes, and otherwise preventing FSA from obtaining access to State capital projects funding and other State programs and benefits.

“It is a shame that it has come to this,” said Tribal Chairman Jeff Haozous. “The Fort Sill Apache have made every effort to work with the Governor and the State of New Mexico. Despite these efforts the Administration is refusing to follow the law and to recognize our equal rights under New Mexico law,” he added.

The lawsuit seeks an order from the Supreme Court requiring Martinez to recognize the Tribe under state law and requiring Martinez and her administration to include the Tribe in the annual State-Tribal Summit. The lawsuit alleges that such recognition will open the door to the collaboration, benefits and recognition enjoyed by every other New Mexico tribe and Pueblo. FSA filed the lawsuit after repeated attempts to obtain legal recognition by the Governor and her administration had failed.

“Being recognized as a state tribe is much bigger than being invited to the Tribal Summit and being included in the state-held contact list,” said Haozous. “It is about recognition and it opens the doorway to many other benefits that all recognized state tribes receive; including collaboration with state agencies and economic development opportunities through infrastructure,” he added.

The Fort Sill Apache Tribe is the successor to the Chiricahua & Warm Springs Apache Tribes. In 1886, they were taken as prisoners of war by the U.S. Army and removed from their homelands of southwestern New Mexico and southeastern Arizona to Florida, Alabama and Oklahoma, where they were released. They organized as the Fort Sill Apache Tribe after a Federal Court affirmed their claim for the loss of over 14.8 million acres of their homeland. The Tribe has always maintained both its independence as Chiricahua – Warm Springs Apaches and its desire to return to its rightful home. After receiving an invitation



FORT SILL APACHE

NEW MEXICO

from the Governor of New Mexico in 1995 and again in 2000 to return to New Mexico, the Tribe purchased the property at Akela Flats in 1998. It was made tribal trust land in 2002 and designated a Reservation in November 2011.

For more information and updates on the Tribe, please follow us on [Twitter](#) (@FortSillApache) and [Facebook](#) (Fort Sill Apache Tribe New Mexico).

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