



KOYOUE TUKADU:
PYRAMID LAKE PAIUTE KIT



◆ WE ARE ALL PEOPLE OF THIS EARTH

Only 200 years ago, Numu roamed and gathered food around the Quinn River Valley, Paradise Valley, Steen Mountains, Hog John, and the area below the Humboldt River near the town of Winnemucca. Their first encounter was with settlers who were most likely en route to Oregon and Idaho through Nevada. Eventually, a mail route was established and squatters settled on Numu land. Due to attacks on these settlers starting in 1860 the Quinn River Camp was built to protect travelers, settlers, and mail routes from the Numu. This camp was renamed in 1865 to Fort McDermitt. It became the base of operations and supply station during the Bannock and Paiute uprising in 1878. Due to this uprising 300 Numu were captured and forced to march up to the Yakima Indian Agency in Southern Washington. These Numu were required to walk 400 miles and the old, sick, and children were shot if they couldn't keep up. Women were abused. Stopping for rest or the bathroom was prohibited. In three years one hundred Numu died due to the damp, cold, and small provisions at Yakima. Many wrote letters to authorities. Without much success, some attempted an escape in 1882. Finally during the summer of 1883, the Numu left without opposition from any except the main agent at Yakima. These Numu went back to the Fort McDermitt area, the Pyramid Lake areas, and Duck Valley – where they established a Shoshone and Paiute culture.

In 1880 Fort McDermitt was abandoned. In 1889, the forts' 3,921 acres in Nevada became the available for homestead and some of it was allotted to the natives as individuals, not as a tribe. For a few years early in the century there was an Indian day school in the area. An executive order by President Taft on September 16, 1912 set aside 120 acres “for Indian allotment” purposes. The Act of January 17, 1936 established the 21,500 acres (in Nevada and Oregon) for the Fort McDermitt Indian Reservation. In 1944, the government described 3,560 acres of land for the use and benefit of the Paiute and Shoshone Tribe of the Fort McDermitt Reservation.

In 1936 a Constitution and Bylaws were adopted by the tribes. The Bureau of Indian Affairs estimates 671 Native Americans living on and adjacent to the reservation consisting of 16,381 acres in Nevada and 18,269 acres in Oregon. Unfortunately, with limited employment to Pacific Western Products, ranching, fire fighting, and local businesses, 60% of the tribal members are unemployed. With hope for the future, the tribe seeks for ways to educate and motivate the children as well as increase opportunities in the community.

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