

**For Immediate Release:**

**Contact: Judi Henckel 269.729.5151**

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**The Nottawaseppi Huron Band of the Potawatomi Collaborates to Provide Necessities for Pine Ridge Indian Reservation**

In the holiday spirit, the Nottawaseppi Huron Band of Potawatomi (NHBP), FireKeepers Casino Hotel (FKCH), the Match-E-Be-Nash-She-Wish Band of Pottawatomi Indians (Gun Lake Tribe) and Gun Lake Casino, and hundreds of community members joined forces to provide clothing, shoes, children's toys, and household items for the Indigenous people of Pine Ridge Indian Reservation in South Dakota.

The Oglala Lakota Pine Ridge Indian Reservation is the second largest Native American reservation in the United States, with over 40,000 people calling the reservation home. Those living within the reservation are faced with many life barriers, including limited access to preventative health care programs, clean water, nutritious food, heat, employment, educational opportunities, transportation and technology.

Nearly 97 percent of the population is living below the federal poverty line, leaving the people of Pine Ridge with limited ability to purchase necessities for their day-to-day lives. Most families are attempting to survive off \$2,600 per year. Living on limited funds hinders the ability to access jobs, transportation, education, medical care and even water. The lack of medical care is prevalent in their mortality and death rates; Pine Ridge residents suffer from the highest infant mortality rate and lowest life expectancy in the United States.

In efforts to support the others in the Native community, NHBP, FKCH, the Gun Lake Tribe and Gun Lake Casino collected funds and essential items to be delivered to the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation. NHBP's donation efforts were initiated by the NHBP Elders Committee, which collected hundreds of items to be donated over the course of several weeks. FKCH also contributed to the efforts by donating several hundred items, as well. Trailers filled with boxes of donations were taken to the Gun Lake donation drop, and loaded onto a trailer that will be delivered to residents of the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation.

"I am proud to see our Native American communities bonding together to show support for a large group of people who are struggling," said NHBP Tribal Council Chairperson Jamie Stuck. "The items donated will provide a lasting impact on the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation. NHBP is humbled to be able to help our Native brothers and sisters."

Gun Lake Casino patrons were able to make monetary donations at designated donation boxes near casino entrances. Guests were incentivized by \$10 in free slot play for their donations toward the cause.

"The Gun Lake Tribe is in awe of the compassion, support and thoughtfulness displayed by the community during the Pine Ridge collection drive," said Bob Peters, Tribal Council Chairperson for the Match-E-Be-Nash-She-Wish Band of Pottawatomi Indians. "Every item donated is vital and will change the lives of the men, women and children living on the reservation."

With caring hearts, representatives from the tribes and casinos loaded an estimated \$28,730 worth of items onto a semi-truck to be delivered to Pine Ridge. NHBP Tribal Elder Dale Anderson and members of the Gun Lake Tribe accompanied the donations to South Dakota, to distribute to those in need.

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### 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)

### Attachments:



Photo: NHBP Tribal Member Kevin Harris II assists in loading the donated items to be taken to Pine Ridge Indian Reservation.



Photo: NHBP Tribal Member Travis Vorce carries one of the boxes of donations for Pine Ridge Indian Reservation onto the trailer.