



Office of the Principal Chief Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians

Patrick H. Lambert, Principal Chief
Richard G. Sneed, Vice-Chief

September 12, 2016

Superintendent Cassius Cash
Great Smoky Mountains National Park
107 Park Headquarters Rd
Gatlinburg, TN 37738

Dear Superintendent Cash:

It is my pleasure to be sending you this request in letter format asking that our Tribe, the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians, enter into an agreement with the Great Smoky Mountains National Park under 36 CFR Part 2. We, the Cherokee, were keepers of a vast landscape covering parts of eight southeastern states that sustained our culture, lifestyle and identity as the aboriginal people of this area. This aboriginal land base was formally documented by C.C. Royce in 1884 in a map known as the "Map of the former territorial limits of the Cherokee Nation of Indians" (also known as the "Royce Map"). This map has been used for generations by scholars and federal agencies to depict the traditional aboriginal territory of the Cherokee people. The land now under management jurisdiction of the Great Smoky Mountains National Park was contained entirely within the aboriginal land base of the Cherokee and continues to have a special connection to all of our Cherokee origins.

The Great Smoky Mountains National Park contains a rich abundance of consumable botanicals and fungi that continue to be an important component of our Cherokee traditional diet and culture. An integral part of maintaining Cherokee livelihood and identity is to sustain traditional relationships with fish, wildlife and plants. We have a well-defined history of understanding how our native ecosystem functions and how to sustainably manage its assets for future generations through the application of Traditional Ecological Knowledge.

By way of this letter, I am formally requesting to enter into an agreement with the Great Smoky Mountains National Park through the authority contained in 36 CFR Part 2 to enable the enrolled members of the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians to gather and remove the Green-headed cone flower (*Rudbeckia laciniata*), also known as "Sochan", and "Ramps" (*Allium tricoccum*). Each plant has been an important component of the Cherokee diet for centuries and the EBCI strives to continue to

provide Tribal members access to these plants into the future. We are confident that a well-managed harvesting agreement for these plants, that requires monitoring and the use of traditional gathering methods, will serve EBCI Tribal member needs while also sustaining these plant resources.

As we move forward in this twenty first century, we have come to an evolutionary point in the field of natural resource management where Traditional Ecological Knowledge must be considered within broader modern-science based initiatives. The Tribe brings more than ten thousand years of sustainable harvesting practices to the table which may help promote stronger collaboration on sustainably managing non-timber forest products such as "Sochan" and "Ramps". We look forward to exploring how our traditional methods of harvest and science together can yield sustainable populations of plant resources. The EBCI understands the process outlined in 36 CFR Part 2 and is willing to participate and assist in any way needed to ensure that an agreement is reached that meets EBCI gathering needs, while also protecting Great Smoky Mountains National Park resources.

I look forward to your response and hope that this is a first step toward a stronger resource management partnership between the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians and Great Smoky Mountain National Park. I have assigned Terri Henry, EBCI Secretary of State, to serve as the point of contact for the Tribe in this matter. Please do not hesitate to contact Ms. Henry at the following email address: terrihenry@nc-choerokee.com or telephone number: (828) 359-7070.

Thank You,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Patrick H. Lambert". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized initial "P".

Patrick H. Lambert
Principal Chief