

Winnemem Wintu Tribal Timeline

- Pre-contact: 14,000 Wintu live along the northern rivers. Early contact with trappers brings deadly epidemics to the Wintu.
- 1848 Pearson Reading discovers gold in Shasta County. California Gold Rush affects Wintu population, lands, and water and food sources.
- 1851 **Cottonwood Treaty** calling for a 35-square-mile reservation for the Wintu, signed August 16 at Reading's ranch on Cottonwood Creek.
- 1852 The U.S. Senate refuses to ratify the Cottonwood Treaty, and 17 other treaties. The treaties were filed under an injunction of secrecy not lifted until 1905.¹
- 1860 William Curl (future tribal leader Dolikentillema) born along McCloud River tributary.
- 1875 U.S. President Ulysses Grant sets aside 280 acres of Winnemem land on the McCloud River for a government fish hatchery (Baird), established for salmon breeding.
- 1887 **"Last Dance."** The Winnemem hold their last (public) war dance at Baird (now under the waters of Shasta Lake). After 1887, the war dance and other ceremonies went underground, to be held only in secret.
- 1889 **The Wintu-Yana Petition** to U.S. President Benjamin Harrison. This letter from Norel Putis was a direct plea by the Winnemem Wintu for rectification of conditions resulting from the failure to ratify the Cottonwood Treaty. It asked for better treatment of the Wintu and Yana, who suffered from the violent incursion of non-Indians.
- 1893 U.S. President Grover Cleveland authorizes the **issuance of land allotments** to non-reservation Indians. These allotments of up to 160 acres allow Winnemem to remain on the McCloud River.
- 1890s Toxic smoke from copper mining smelters causes a massive die-off of trees around the McCloud and Sacramento Rivers.
- 1907 Florence Violet Curl (Puilulimet) born Nov. 28 on the McCloud River. She is recognized at birth by tribal doctors as a future leader.
- 1910 Decimated by disease and violence, fewer than 400 Wintu remain.
- 1914 Horace Wilson of the Interior Dept. submits a letter to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs stating that the Winnemem (Baird) Indians along the McCloud River should have land purchased for them.
- 1915 In April, Indian Agent John Terrell proposes the purchase of lands above the government fishery at Baird for the Winnemem. He describes the self-sufficiency of the tribe based on salmon and crops, and gives a census of the Indians present which includes Flora Curl, age 5. In August, Terrell reports to Washington that D.P. Doak, who owns tracts of this land on the McCloud River, refuses to sell land for the Indian allotments, waiting instead for higher prices due to speculation of the building of a new dam to provide power. The letter also states that the government will provide lands for the Indians removed due to the dam's construction.
- 1922 With funds from the Snyder Act, which authorized Indian assistance, Redding Rancheria is created for homeless Pit River, Yana, and Wintu from desolate bands. The Winnemem remain on the McCloud River.
- 1928 First trip to Washington, D.C. related to **California Claims Cases**. Joe Campbell and Alfred Gillis, Winnemem Wintu, travel by train from San Francisco to Washington, D.C. to plead for an investigation of the Winnemem case in the U.S. Court of Claims for the "lost" 1851 Treaties.
- 1937 U.S. government retakes allotments to begin removal of Winnemem from the river. William Curl passes away, and is buried by the river. The Indian Land Acquisition Act for the Central Valley Project is introduced.
- 1938-1945 Construction of Shasta Dam. At its completion, it creates the largest man-made reservoir in California².
- 1938 Florence Curl relocates from the flooding at Baird to a village site located at the base of Bear Mountain, northeast of Redding. The property is owned by Andy Jones, whom Florence Curl marries. The village is still inhabited into the 21st century by Winnemem Wintu.
- 1941 Winnemem Wintu delegates go to Washington to fight for the passage of a bill to allow California Indians to employ their own attorneys to press claims against the government. The Winnemem, aware of the proposed settlement of the claims case, warn other tribes that it is unacceptable. The **Central Valley Project Indian Land Acquisition Act** is signed into law. Only one provision of the law will be met: the creation of a trust land cemetery for the Winnemem in Central Valley (now Shasta Lake City). The Bureau of Indian Affairs calls on Florence to locate cemeteries along the river for removal. Bodies from 183 Winnemem graves are disinterred along the river, including those of William and Jenny Curl, the recently-deceased parents of Florence Curl Jones.
- 1943 Winnemem are removed from their homelands on the lower McCloud River (Baird area). Water from the filling of Shasta Lake will soon inundate these village areas and sacred sites.
- 1944 U.S. Court of Claims awards \$17 million to all California Indians to compensate for the 18 unratified treaties. This works out to \$1.25 per acre. The government deducted \$12 million for the 600,000 acres made into rancherias and reservations. Winnemem did not receive their land, but continued to press their claim for lands within the homelands and for the allotment denials for children of previous allottees.

¹ Journey to Justice, Alice R. Hoveman ©2002 Turtle Bay Exploration Park p. 30

² U.S. Dept. of the Interior, Bureau of Reclamation website, <http://www.usbr.gov/dataweb/html/shasta.html#general>, 9/3/04

Winnemem Wintu Tribal Timeline cont.

1943-1963	Over a 20 year span, Winnemem actively oppose the settlement offer of \$1.25 per acre.
1950s	Former U.S. President Herbert Hoover heads commission endorsing termination policies for California.
1952	Current Winnemem Wintu Tribe spiritual and tribal leader Caleen Sisk born.
1953	Termination sentiment prompts Congress to pass Resolution 108, which declares all Indians should be free of government control and eligible for services available to any citizen. Public Law 280 transfers responsibility for Indian policy from the federal government to state and local agencies.
1954	California Senate committee hearing finds most reservations are unprepared for termination. State does not want to accept responsibility for correcting the BIA's financial failures and fights federal termination legislation.
1958	Despite California's efforts, the first California Rancheria Bill is enacted, terminating 41 rancherias.
1960s	The Winnemem continue to oppose the land claims decision. The 1960s saw a rise in radicalism, and more Indians went to colleges and universities as well as vocational programs. Winnemem students began to come home with vocational training paid for by BIA funds. Toward the end of the decade, as surplus government land was being seized by Indian groups, plans began for the Wintu to occupy Toyon Center, an abandoned government housing project developed for the builders of Shasta Dam.
1970s	During this decade numerous Winnemem Wintu attend colleges on BIA higher education grants. These will later be denied to the same individuals as the Bureau tells them they are no longer recognized Indians. Winnemem challenge this action in <i>Malone vs. Morton</i> .
1971	Toyon Center occupied by the Winnemem, other Wintu, and other outside Indian people. This site was held until 1989 when the government forced the residents out and bulldozed all of the buildings to the ground.
1978	The American Indian Religious Freedom Act is passed. Florence Jones receives a use permit to practice Winnemem ceremonies on what is now considered U.S. Forest Service land. This is believed to be the first successful use of AIRFA. This current permit with the USFS expires in 2005.
1980s	Ceremonies continue openly for the Winnemem and permits and Memoranda of Understanding and of Agreement are developed for the protection of tribal gathering places, ceremonial sites and sacred places. The Winnemem Wintu work with government agencies and programs on education, health, and housing.
1985	The Indian Health Service of the Bureau of Indian Affairs terminates services to Winnemem tribal members.
1986	Caleen Sisk-Franco receives a federal Fish and Wildlife Permit allowing her to hold and carry Eagle feathers.
1989-90	The BIA completes destruction of Toyon and during cleanup burns down a building designated in a federal court stipulation agreement to serve as an administration building. This agreement also forces the Wintu-Toyon group to petition under the Federal Acknowledgment Process to hold the land. The Winnemem support the Wintu-Toyon band's efforts. The Winnemem also seek redress for the attempt to terminate the government-to-government relationship between the U.S. and the Winnemem by the BIA—despite other agreements between the Winnemem and the USFS, BLM, and USFWS. The Winnemem continue to meet with Caltrans, U.S. Forest Service, BLM and other state and local agencies to protect herbal gathering areas, sacred places and waterways.
1987-1999	The Winnemem engage in a lawsuit against the Forest Service to stop development of a ski resort on Mt Shasta. In a victory for the tribe, the Forest Service halts the development.
1990	On June 16, Caleen Sisk-Franco, her husband Mark Franco, nephew Rick Wilson and Susan Marie engage in a fast for acknowledgement of the Winnemem's tribal status, under the direction of Winnemem spiritual and tribal leader, Florence Curl Jones. The fast lasts 21 days and is brought to a close by Senator Daniel Inouye's promises to assist the Winnemem Wintu in clarifying their status.
1993	The Indian Health Service terminates service to the Winnemem Wintu. Mark Franco and Rick Wilson begin a fast to the death. A delegation including Florence Jones and Caleen Sisk-Franco goes to Washington to speak with Assistant Interior Secretary Ada Deer, who orders IHS to resume services to halt a "preventable tragedy."
1995	Florence Jones retires and begins transition to her successor Caleen Sisk-Franco, the new leader of the Winnemem Wintu. Additional permits are obtained from the federal government and easements, granted by private lumber companies and facilitated by the USFS, are obtained for sacred sites on private lands.
2001	In August, Florence Jones and the Winnemem are profiled in a nationally-broadcast PBS documentary, <i>In the Light of Reverence</i> .
2002	On June 4 th , Winnemem Wintu leaders Caleen Sisk-Franco and Mark Franco testify before Congress on sacred sites protection, and the raising of Shasta Dam and the catastrophic effect it will have on remaining sacred sites and ceremonial grounds still in use after all the years of cultural genocide.
2003	Florence Jones passes away on November 22. Her obituary is printed in the <i>New York Times</i> and the <i>Los Angeles Times</i> .
2004	From Sept. 12-16, Winnemem hold Tuna Leliit Chonas – Hu'p Chona ("dance in the old way," or war dance) at Shasta Dam to oppose the proposed raising of the dam and the flooding of tribal cultural properties.