



**INDIAN COUNTRY TODAY**  
Digital. Indigenous. News.

## E-Weekly Newsletter - July 16, 2020



# Indian Country's COVID-19 syllabus

**Data, story summaries, lists of closures, resources  
(As of July 13, 2020 11:40 am EDT)**

### **COVID-19 Tracker in the United States**

**Total cases:** 3,047,671

**Total deaths:** 132,056

#### **Jurisdictions reporting cases:** 54

(50 states, District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, Guam, and US Virgin Islands)

**Cases confirmed in the Indian health system:** 13,291

#### **Total deaths in the Indian health system:** 555

(Confirmed by tribes, the Indian Health Service, state public health agencies or the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention)

\*\*\* Report COVID-19 cases in your tribe on this [Google Form](#) \*\*\*

[Click here for stories that have been posted by Indian Country Today](#)

Inside this week's issue of Indian Country Today

#Coronavirus  
Check out Indian Country Today's coverage of COVID-19

#NativeMascots  
Washington NFL team officially retires racist, Native-themed team name

#NativeVote20  
Why Joe Biden should consider a Native woman for Vice President

# Washington NFL team kicks out R-word

By Aliyah Chavez  
Kolby KickingWoman

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*Updated: 'A long journey and many sacrifices' leading to the scrapping of racist name and logo*

The Washington NFL franchise announced Monday it is retiring its team name and logo, a fight Native activists have been leading for decades.

The franchise is developing a new name and design under the direction of team owner Dan Snyder and head coach Ron Rivera.

"On July 3rd, we announced the commencement of a thorough review of the team's name," the team "

said in a [statement](#). "Today we are announcing we will be retiring the (deleted) name and logo upon completion of this review.

The team gave no timeline on when a new name and logo will be released. Spokesman Sean DeBarbieri told *Indian Country Today* in an email, "We won't be commenting until the full process has been completed."

The fight to change Native-themed mascots began in the 1970s and has since been largely led by Native women including Suzan Harjo, Hodulgee Muscogee and Cheyenne. It was carried into 2020 with the help of Amanda Blackhorse, Diné, Crystal Echo Hawk, Pawnee, and many others.

Harjo, after hearing the news, rang praise for those who fought for the change over the years, saying it was brought about by Native people and allies and should not be attributed "to a change of heart by the team's energy."

"We've ended more than two-thirds of these obscenities and now have only 900 or so left to go, but the fall of this king of the mountain of trash will help others to give up their ghosts of racism even faster, so, Aho, Mr. Snyder and thank you, Mvto, Mr. Fred Smith," Harjo said in a statement.

She said news outlets need to stop printing the racial slur in headlines and story text.

"Shame on them," Harjo said. "We have eliminated over two-thirds, that's over two thousand of these [Native mascots] from the landscape of American sports, and that is a societal sea change."



PHOTO ILLUSTRATION BY TOMÁS KARMELO AMAYA

[Read more here](#)

# Three Affiliated Tribes sue over minerals ruling

By James MacPherson  
Associated Press

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*Lawsuit says the Interior Department is trying to illegally take part of the Fort Berthold reservation ceded to the tribe before statehood*

BISMARCK, N.D. (AP) — Leaders of the Mandan, Hidatsa and Arikara Nation in North Dakota sued the federal government Wednesday due to a U.S. Interior Department opinion that sides with the state over valuable mineral rights beneath a portion of a man-made lake on the Missouri River.

The Three Affiliated Tribes' lawsuit said the Interior Department is attempting to illegally take part of the Fort Berthold Indian reservation ceded to the tribe before statehood. The lawsuit seeks unspecified monetary damages.

At stake is an estimated \$100 million in unpaid royalties and future payments certain to come from oil drilling beneath the river, which was dammed by the federal government in the 1950s, flooding more than a tenth of the 1,500-square-mile reservation to create Lake Sakakawea.

The issue of mineral rights ownership beneath the big lake has escalated over the past decade, after oil companies began using an advanced horizontal drill technique to tap oil beneath the waterway.

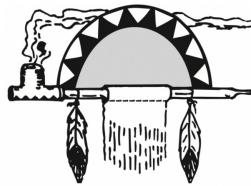
Three Affiliated Tribes Chairman Mark Fox said in a statement that the federal agency, as trustee of American Indian lands, "violated both its fiduciary duty as the tribe's trustee and its treaty obligations" in a "false" opinion in May that said the state is the legal owner of submerged lands beneath the river where it flows through the reservation in west-central North Dakota.

The memo by Daniel Jorjani, solicitor for the department, said a review by Historical Research Associates, Inc. shows the state is the legal owner of submerged lands beneath the river. That contradicts a January 2017 memo by former solicitor Hilary Tompkins, the department secretary under Obama and enrolled member of the Navajo Nation.

[Read more here](#)



*Lawsuit says the Interior Department is trying to illegally take part of the Fort Berthold reservation ceded to the tribe before statehood*



## ELKO BAND COUNCIL

**Title:** Lead Officer  
**Location:** Elko Indian Colony  
**Salary:** \$60,000 – D.O.E.  
**Opening Date:** July 6, 2010  
**Closing Date:** July 20, 2020

### **JOB SUMMARY:**

Under the direct supervision of the Elko Band Council. The Lead Officer will provide direction and leadership to the Elko Band Police Department, manages the daily activities of the Department, ensures safety, security, the preservation of life and property by maintaining law and order, enforcing Tribal laws and Ordinances, State and Federal laws where applicable. Maintains confidentiality of all privileged information, and act as Lead command of the Police Department. Will oversee the Police Department.

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**Title:** Police Officer  
**Location:** Elko Indian Colony  
**Salary:** \$50,000 – D.O.E.  
**Opening Date:** July 6, 2010  
**Closing Date:** July 20, 2020

### **JOB SUMMARY:**

Under the direct supervision of the Lead Officer. The Police Officer is responsible for the preservation of peace within the community, protection of life and property, and enforcement of Tribal ordinances, state and federal law where applicable. The Police Officer patrols designated areas of the Elko Indian Colony to prevent, discover, and deter crime, responds to calls, writes detailed reports on police-related activities, and must be able to act without immediate supervision and exercise independent judgement in meeting emergencies.

## 328-36 West 53<sup>rd</sup> Street

Applications are now available for **328-36 West 53<sup>rd</sup> Street**, a 40-unit HUD-subsidized building designed for any very low-income family household, located at 328 West 53<sup>rd</sup> Street in Manhattan. Eligibility will be based on Section 8 guidelines and HUD regulations.

Interested persons may obtain an application by writing to:

**Fairstead Management**  
560 Lenox Avenue  
New York, NY 10037

Completed applications must be sent by regular mail to the P.O. Box indicated on the application. Duplicate applications will be dropped to the bottom of the list. Completed applications should be received no later than the deadline date of September 25<sup>th</sup>, 2020



# Appeals court temporarily halts Dakota Access shutdown

Associated Press

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*The U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit says its decision to grant a stay 'should not be construed in any way as a ruling on the merits' of the case*

BISMARCK, N.D. (AP) — A federal appeals court on Tuesday temporarily halted a judge's order that the Dakota Access Pipeline be shut down in three weeks.

The U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit issued an "administrative stay" of the judge's order. Though the appeals court said it "should not be construed in any way as a ruling on the merits" of the case, The Bismarck Tribune reported.

The stay will remain in place until the appeals court rules on whether developer Energy Transfer can keep oil flowing while the court decides the Texas-based company's appeal of the shutdown order.

U.S. District Court Judge James Boasberg last week ordered the line shut down by Aug. 5 pending a lengthy environmental review. The line began pumping oil more than three years ago. Energy Transfer estimates it would take three months to empty the pipeline of oil and complete steps to preserve it for future use.

Pipeline supporter GAIN Coalition, which includes businesses, trade associations and labor groups, called the order "a key step forward in reaffirming the Dakota Access Pipeline's critical role in the American energy infrastructure network." North Dakota Republican U.S. Sen. Kevin Cramer, another supporter, called the temporary halt "common sense."

But Earthjustice attorney Jan Hasselman, who represents the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe, said the move is not significant.

Hasselman said in a statement an administrative stay is typical and "is not in any way indicative of how the court is going to rule — it just buys the court a little additional time to make a decision."

[Read more here](#)



In this Oct. 5, 2016, photo, heavy equipment is seen at a site where sections of the Dakota Access pipeline were being buried near the town of St. Anthony in Morton County, N.D. (Tom Stromme/The Bismarck Tribune via AP, File)

# Want to win? Consider 3 Native women for vice president

By Mark Trahant

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*Analysis: Do the math and then look to Indian Country to deliver the electoral votes*

Former vice president and the presumptive nominee Joe Biden says he will announce his running mate before Aug. 1. He has said it will be a woman. And a lot of the speculation says it will be a woman of color.

There are lists of candidates being vetted including Sens. Kamala Harris, Tammy Baldwin, Tammy Duckworth and Elizabeth Warren, Govs. Michelle Lujan Grisham and Gina Raimondo, and Atlanta Mayor Keisha Lance Bottoms. Susan Rice is another possibility. She has deep

government experience including representing the United States at the United Nations.

Of course there are more names than that. The Biden campaign has been successful at keeping its selection process a mystery.

Yet none of the lists include a Native American woman. And the thing is, a Native woman could be the smart choice.

Why? Because Native Americans know how to win these days from the football front office to the Supreme Court; there is a hot hand at play.

Then there is the math: Yes Native Americans are a tiny minority -- roughly 2 percent of the population -- but Native voters could make a difference in at least six states, four of which Donald Trump won four years ago. (Those four states: Arizona, Wisconsin, North Carolina and Michigan total of 52 electoral votes. Add Nevada and Minnesota, and the total reaches 68 electoral votes.)

And what kind of voter turnout would there be to carry those six states? There is a story here.

[\*\*Read more here\*\*](#)



# Mascots honor an Indian who never was

By Mary Annette Pember

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*How did using Native American themed mascots and names become a thing?*

Pop culture first created the mythical image of a universal Native American about 100 years ago. Now outdated and ousted as a creation of white privilege, the myth is at last being abandoned.

Typically, athletic teams using Native American-inspired mascots insist the practice is a means to honor Native peoples. Although the sentiment may be accurate, the history behind these names discloses a truth far removed from genuine honor.

Stories about how the Washington football team acquired the R-word as its name and mascot vary. According to team history, the 1933 owner George Preston Marshall changed the team's name from the Braves to the R-word to honor its Native American coach William "Lone Star" Dietz and to avoid confusion with the Boston Braves baseball team. Washington Post writer Richard Leiby later challenged this story in 2013, finding it was unlikely that Dietz was in fact Native American.

Similarly, according to Cleveland baseball history, the Indians name was chosen in 1915 to honor Louis Sockalexis of the Penobscot tribe who played for the then-Cleveland Spiders in 1897. Joe Posnanski of NBC Sports, however, [found in 2014](#) that the name was actually the creation of a group of sportswriters in 1915. Looking to renew fan interest in the poorly performing Cleveland Naps, sportswriters at the Cleveland Plain Dealer and other newspapers created a "nomenclature committee" and sponsored a contest in which fans could choose a new name for the team.

Posnanski wrote: "The Sockalexis story was entirely untrue, a bit of state funded propaganda to conceal the obvious fact the Cleveland team was named the Indians only to capitalize on the many racist clichés that could be used to promote the team; it was a glorious opportunity for HI-larious Native American jokes and race-specific clichés and insults that fit well in headlines."

[Read more here](#)



A shadow is cast against the backdrop during the Oneida Indian Nation's Change the Mascot symposium on Oct. 7, 2013, in Washington, calling for the Washington Redskins NFL football team to change its name. (AP Photo/Carolyn Kaster, File)

# ‘A lot of questions’ in potential Remington Arms sale to Navajo Nation

By Mary Anette Pember

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*Corrected A sale to a tribal nation seemed like a perfect fit – until a risk assessment reported otherwise*

The Navajo Nation seemed to be the answer to Remington Arms' legal problems. The venerable arms maker is over 200 years old but has been struggling under the weight of lawsuits relating to the manufacture of AR-15 style automatic weapons, typically the gun of choice for perpetrators of mass shootings. Bankruptcy and subsequent sale to a sovereign immune entity, such as a tribal nation, however, seemed like a good move.



In this Jan. 17, 2013, photo, a flag hangs at Remington Arms Company, in Ilion, N.Y. (AP Photo/Mike Groll, File)

The Wall Street Journal recently reported that the Navajo Nation is once again in talks to buy the beleaguered company.

Such a sale is fraught with tragedy and irony – as well as a financial risk that may not be entirely mitigated by sovereign immunity.

The nation unsuccessfully tried to purchase Remington Arms in 2018 when the company filed for Chapter 11 but instead transferred ownership to creditors including Franklin Resources Inc. and JPMorgan Chase and Company.

Family members of nine people who were killed in the 2012 Sandy Hook massacre have successfully brought a lawsuit against Remington Arms in Connecticut state court. The shooter used a Remington-made Bushmaster military style rifle to kill 26 people at the Connecticut school, 20 of whom were first graders.

Typically firearms manufacturers are shielded from victim lawsuits via the 2005 federal Protection of Lawful Commerce in Arms Act. The Connecticut Supreme Court, however, is allowing the suit to move forward based on a law regarding the sale or marketing of firearms; the U.S. Supreme Court has declined to review Connecticut's decision.

[\*\*Read more here\*\*](#)

# Returning an Olympic win to Jim Thorpe

By Kolby KickingWoman

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*New petition seeks to have International Olympic Committee correct record books*

Who is the greatest athlete in American history?

Simone Biles has quite the resumé to make a compelling argument. Tiger Woods and Serena Williams dominated their respective sports at levels rarely seen. Muhammad Ali backed up his brashness with results in the boxing ring.

Yet, perhaps the greatest American athlete of all time wasn't even considered an American citizen until 1924. American Indians weren't granted citizenship until then President Calvin Coolidge signed a bill in June of that year.

After his dominating performance at the 1912 Olympic games in Stockholm, Sweden, King Gustav V proclaimed Jim Thorpe, Sac and Fox and Potawatomi, the best in the world.

"You, sir, are the greatest athlete in the world. I would consider it an honor to shake your hand," Gustav V said after placing two gold medals around Thorpe's neck.

Thorpe ran away from his competition during the games – literally – winning gold medals in both the pentathlon and decathlon. He was so far ahead of his fellow competitors, Thorpe only needed to finish 7th or better in the final event of the decathlon, the 1,500-meter race, to win gold.

However, the [official results](#) from the 1912 games list Thorpe as a co-gold medal winner with athletes from Norway and Sweden.

This is due to the International Olympic Committee stripping Thorpe of his accomplishments in 1913 after they found out he had been paid to play professional baseball prior to the 1912 games. A change in rules later allowed many professional athletes to compete in the Olympics.

In 1982, replicas of the medals were returned to his family, but the official records still don't recognize Thorpe as the sole winner. ([Read more here](#))



Jim Thorpe, Sac and Fox, in Carlisle Indian School track uniform, running at Stockholm in Olympic track practice. (Photo courtesy of Cumberland County Historical Society)

# Thanks For Reading!

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