For Immediate Release
DATE: Monday February 22nd at 2PM
LOCATION: Tule River Encampment off Road190
TIME: 2PM

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*****FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE*****

TULE RIVER UNHOUSE RESIDENTS FILE A RESTRAINING ORDER DEMANDING THAT THE TULARE COUNTY SHERIFF END HARASSMENT AND EFFORTS TO EVICT THEM DURING THE PANDEMIC
PRESS CONFERENCE SCHEDULED FOR 2PM AT THE ENCAMPMENT

Porterville, CA — This morning residents of the encampment on the Tule River, supported by Tulare County community groups, are filing suit in Superior Court, asking for an injunction to stop the Tulare County Sheriff from forcing them to leave their homes. River residents were given notices by Sheriff deputies on January 18th announcing that the Sheriff would forcibly remove their encampment. Tule River residents are experiencing another chapter in a multi-week harassment and eviction campaign by the Tulare County Sheriff's Office ("TSCO") and live in fear of the day they will be forced to leave a place they have called home for up to the last five years. TSCO's practice is in direct contravention of case law, which the Supreme Court recently supported, establishing that arresting unhoused people on public lands, without providing any alternative shelter, is cruel and unusual punishment. There is no place to which the encampment residents can move. Tulare County has no vacant shelter beds and a waiting list of four years.

The eviction threat defies the recommendations of the Centers for Disease Control, which state that encampments should remain in place during the pandemic, and that forcing people to abandon them risks exposing both residents and the surrounding community to COVID-19.

An earlier eviction of an encampment on the St. John's River not only displaced those residents, who had no place to go, resulted in the burning of their belongings in a bonfire beside the river. Tule River residents are asking the court to intervene to prevent a similar human rights disaster.

Rosendo "Chendo" Hernandez, one of the plaintiffs, said that "These are our homes, and some of us have lived here for years. We have no place to go, and we fear that leaving our encampment will expose us to the coronavirus."

Civil Rights Attorney Michael Bracamontes said, "TSCO's practice is in direct contravention of case law, which the Supreme Court recently supported, establishing that arresting unhoused people on public lands, without providing any alternative shelter, is cruel and unusual punishment."

Mari Perez-Ruiz of the **Central Valley Empowerment Alliance, Inc.** said, "We support the Tule River residents. If they are driven from their homes it will not just harm them, but it will risk the health of our whole community at a time when we are trying to recover from the pandemic. People have a right to housing, and the Sheriff is responsible for protecting that right."

A press conference is scheduled at the encampment at 2PM today.

Speakers:
Mari Perez-Ruiz, Central Valley Empowerment Alliance, INC**.**
Michael Bracamontes, Bracamontes & Vlasak, P.C., Civil Rights Law Firm in San Francisco,, BV Law of San Francisco,
Rosendo "Chendo" Hernandez, Plaintiff
Daniel Penalosa, City of Porterville Council Member

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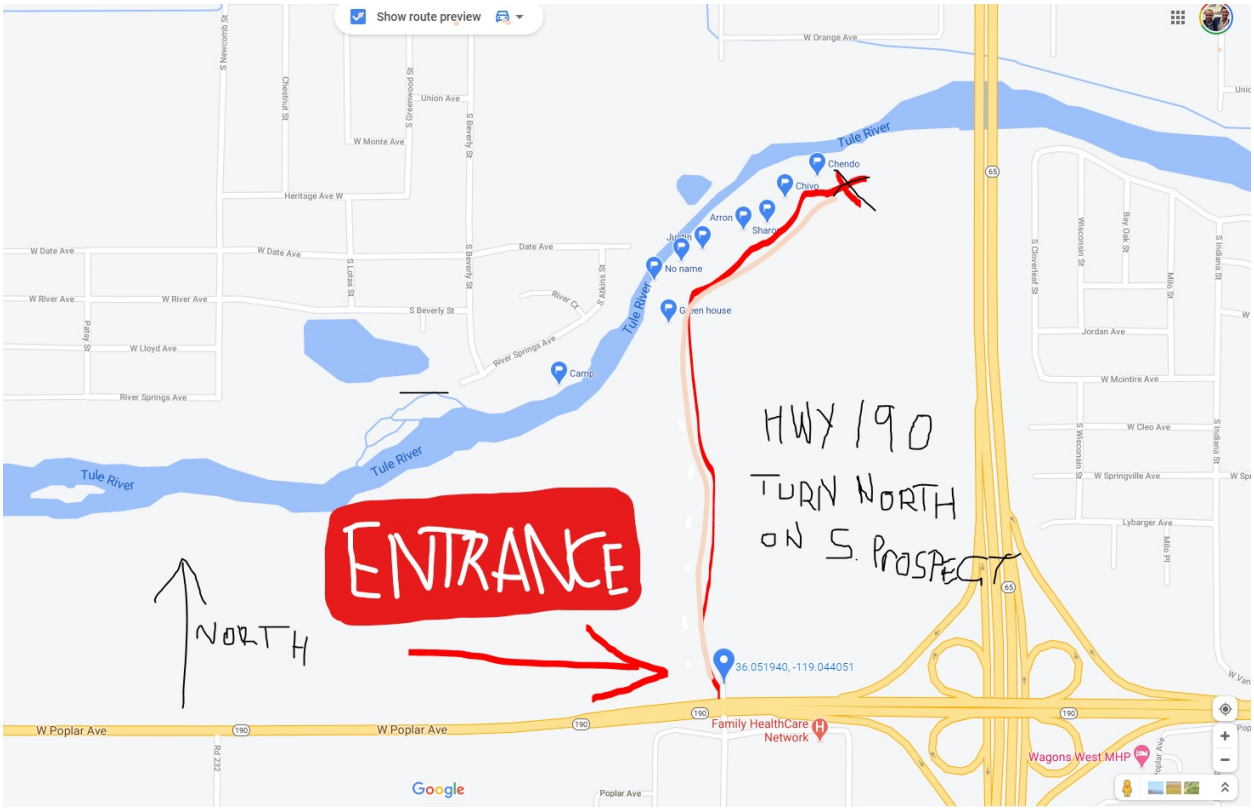
Detailed Directions to PRESS CONFERENCE on Next Page

Related Links
https://www.visaliatimesdelta.com/story/news/2021/01/12/tires-trash-ablaze-near-homeless-encampment-in-visalia/6632663002/?fbclid=IwAR2ei_L10VuwZWLbbeC9ugf2Y7BbfJCRyQmrg9UXVzrBU41rrR9-DHEIFhM

https://capitalandmain.com/tulares-homeless-to-be-thrown-off-their-levee-sanctuary-0216?fbclid=IwAR12flWljYeFKTJ9qkh1oj45_YGhW2WAw-wz6RJltkogW_d1U7ZWdz4ZKGY

https://fb.watch/3M0AnhlG-N/

DIRECTIONS to PRESS CONFERENCE



Press Conference Location will be at the affected encampment on the Tule River in Porterville Ca

Camp Location is on the south bank of the Tule River, West of HWY 65 in Porterville Ca 93257

- To get to the encampment you will have to get on a dirt access road off of hwy 190, the entrance is on the north side of hwy 190, first dirt road west of hwy 65. Travel North until you get to the river levee. At the levee turn right. Traveling east along the river levee- go about 100 yards. CVEA staff will be on site at noon to help with location.

GPS Cords to encampment entrance.

36°03'06.9"N 119°02'38.6"W

36.051927, -119.044046

Here is the Google maps link: https://goo.gl/maps/WF8bEBrpUWpGbXiS8