

Public Law 100-228  
100th Congress

An Act

Dec. 31, 1987  
[S. 1684]

To settle Seminole Indian land claims within the State of Florida, and for other purposes.

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

Seminole Indian  
Land Claims  
Settlement Act  
of 1987.  
Contracts.  
25 USC 1772  
note.

SHORT TITLE

SECTION 1. This Act may be cited as the "Seminole Indian Land Claims Settlement Act of 1987".

FINDINGS AND POLICY

SEC. 2. Congress finds and declares that—

(1) there is pending before the United States District Court for the southern district of Florida a lawsuit by the Seminole Tribe which involves certain lands within the State and there are also claims by the tribe to other areas of Florida by virtue of an 1839 Executive order of the President and by right of non-extinguishment of aboriginal possession which has been asserted but not filed in court;

(2) the pendency of this lawsuit and these claims may result in economic hardships for residents of the State by clouding the titles to lands in the State, including lands not now involved in the lawsuit;

(3) the pendency of this lawsuit and these claims also have clouded the easement rights of the South Florida Water Management District in lands necessary for use as a water flowage and storage area, which is part of a federally authorized project for flood control and water management in central and southern Florida, and which is being used to provide and regulate a water supply for the residents of south Florida;

(4) the State, the district, and the tribe have executed agreements for the purposes of resolving tribal land claims and settling the lawsuit—

(A) which include conveyance of land and payment of consideration to the tribe; and

(B) which require implementing legislation by the Congress of the United States and the Legislature of the State of Florida;

(5) Congress shares with the parties to such agreements a desire to settle these Indian claims in the State of Florida without additional cost to the United States;

(6) there is considerable uncertainty as to the nature and extent of the water rights of the tribe, and that continued controversy over this should be settled by agreement; and

(7) the State, the district, and the tribe have entered into a compact which, if approved by Congress and the Florida Legisla-

Water.  
25 USC 1772.

Flood control.

ture, creates specifically defined water rights in lieu of the undefined water rights claimed by the tribe.

#### DEFINITIONS

#### SEC. 3. For purposes of this Act—

25 USC 1772a.

(1) The term "tribe" means the Seminole Tribe of Indians of Florida or Seminole Tribe of Florida, a tribe of American Indians recognized by the United States and organized under section 16 of the Indian Reorganization Act of 1934 (25 U.S.C. 476) and recognized by the State of Florida pursuant to chapter 285, Florida Statutes, and its successors.

(2) The term "State" means the State of Florida and its agencies, political subdivisions, constitutional officers, officials of its agencies and subdivisions and their successors.

(3) The term "district" means the South Florida Water Management District, the agency of the State of Florida created by chapter 25270, laws of Florida (1949) to operate pursuant to chapter 373 Florida Statutes, and its successors.

(4) The term "Secretary" means the Secretary of the Interior.

(5) The term "lands or natural resources" means any real property or natural resources, or any interest in or right involving any real property or natural resources, including minerals and mineral rights, timber and timber rights, water and water rights, and rights to hunt and fish.

(6) The term "Settlement Agreement" means the instrument—

(A) executed by the Seminole Tribe, the State of Florida, and the South Florida Water Management District; and

(B) which will be presented for approval by all three parties to the United States District Court for the southern district of Florida for the purpose of terminating the lawsuit entitled Seminole Tribe of Indians of Florida, v. State of Florida, et al., (Docket No. 78-6116-CIV), and for the extinguishment of rights to all potential or unsettled claims which the tribe may have to lands or natural resources in the State and the purchase of certain tribal interests in real property.

(7) The term "settlement funds" means those funds which the State of Florida and the South Florida Water Management District have agreed to pay to the tribe under the Settlement Agreement.

(8) The term "compact" means the Compact incorporated in the Settlement Agreement between the tribe, the State, and the district, which specifically defines the nature and extent of Seminole water rights and the manner of their use within the confines of the area of the district.

#### FINDINGS BY THE SECRETARY

SEC. 4. (a) Section 5 shall not take effect until 180 days after the effective date of this Act, or the date the last of the events described in subsection (b) have occurred and the Secretary so finds, whichever date occurs later.

Effective date.  
25 USC 1772b.

(b) The events referred to in subsection (a) are—

(1) the State and district pay settlement funds pursuant to the terms of the Settlement Agreement for the case captioned

Seminole Tribe of Indians of Florida v. State of Florida et al., or equivalent consideration by land exchange to the tribe; and

(2) the State enacts appropriate legislation to carry out the commitments under the Settlement Agreement including the compact between the State, the district and the tribe, and the State and the district have given the waiver specified in paragraph 5c of such agreement.

**APPROVAL OF PRIOR TRANSFERS AND EXTINGUISHMENT OF CLAIMS AND ABORIGINAL TITLE INVOLVING FLORIDA INDIANS**

**SEC. 5.** (a)(1) Effective on the date of enactment of this Act, the Congress does hereby approve the Settlement Agreement, including the compact, and any exhibits attached thereto.

(2) Subject to the provisions of section 4, the Secretary shall publish findings required by section 4 and the Settlement Agreement in the Federal Register, and upon such publication—

(A) the transfers, waivers, releases, relinquishments and other commitments made by the tribe in the Settlement Agreement with the State and the district, including the compact provided for in the Settlement Agreement, shall be in full force and effect on the terms and conditions stated in such settlement, and

(B) the transfers, waivers, releases, relinquishments and other commitments validated by subparagraph (A) and the transfers and extinguishments approved and validated by paragraphs (1) and (2) of subsection (b) shall be deemed to have been made in accordance with the Constitution and all laws of the United States that are specifically applicable to transfers of lands or natural resources from, by, or on behalf of any Indian, Indian nation, or tribe of Indians including but not limited to the Trade and Intercourse Act of 1790, Act of July 22, 1790 (25 U.S.C. 177, ch. 33, sec. 4, 1 Stat. 137).

(b)(1)(A) Subject to subparagraph (B), all claims to lands within the State based upon aboriginal title by the tribe or any predecessor or successor in interest, are hereby extinguished. Any transfer of lands or natural resources located anywhere within the State, including transfers pursuant to a statute or treaty with any State or the United States, by, from, or on behalf of the tribe or any predecessor or successor in interest, shall be deemed to be in full force and effect, as provided in subsection (a)(2).

(B) Nothing in this paragraph shall be construed as extinguishing any aboriginal right, title, interest, or claim to lands or natural resources solely to the extent of the rights or interests defined as "excepted interests" in paragraph 4a of the Settlement Agreement between the tribe, State and the district.

(2)(A) By virtue of the approval of a transfer of lands or natural resources effected by this section, or an extinguishment of aboriginal title effected thereby, all claims against the United States, the State or subdivision thereof, or any other person or entity, by the tribe or any predecessor or successor in interest, arising subsequent to the transfer and based upon any interest in or right involving such lands or natural resources, including claims for trespass damages or claims for use and occupancy, shall be extinguished as of the date of the transfer.

Congress.  
25 USC 1772c.

Federal  
Register,  
publication.

(B) The United States shall not be liable directly or indirectly for any claim or cause of action arising from the approval of the Settlement Agreement and compact or exhibits attached thereto.

(3) Nothing in this Act shall be construed as extinguishing any right, title, interest, or claim to lands or natural resources in the State based on use and occupancy or acquired under Federal or State law by any individual Indian which is not derived from or through the tribe, its predecessor or predecessors in interest, or some other American Indian tribe.

(4) Any Indian, Indian nation, or tribe of Indians, other than the Seminole Tribe as defined in section 3(1), or any predecessor or successor in interest, or any member thereof, whose transfer of lands or natural resources is approved or whose aboriginal title or claims is extinguished by paragraph (1) or (2) of this subsection may, within a period of one year after publication of the Secretary's finding pursuant to subsection (a) of this section, bring an action against the State and the United States in the United States District Court for the southern district of Florida. Such action shall be in lieu of a suit against any other person, agency, or political subdivision on a cause of action which may have existed in the absence of this subsection.

(c) Neither subsection (a) of this section nor section 7 of this Act—

(1) enacts present or future laws of the State as Federal law,

(2) grants consent to any future changes in the Settlement Agreement or compact that could impose any obligation or liability on the United States, or

(3) commits the United States to finance any project or activity not otherwise authorized by Federal law.

#### SPECIAL PROVISIONS FOR SEMINOLE TRIBE

SEC. 6. (a) Notwithstanding any clouds on title, the Secretary is authorized and directed, as soon as practicable after the date of enactment of this Act, to accept the transfer to the United States, to be held in trust and as a reservation for the use and benefit of the Seminole Tribe of Florida, the approximate 15 sections of land being described as follows:

25 USC 1772d.

Beginning at the southwest corner of section 31, township 48 south, Range 35 east; thence easterly along the south border of sections 31, 32 and 33, township 48 south, Range 35 east, to the westernmost boundary of the levee 28 works in section 33, township 48 south, Range 35 east; thence continuing north along the westernmost boundary of the levee 28 works to the point at which the westernmost boundary of the levee 28 works intersects the southernmost boundary of the levee 4 works in section 9, township 48 south, Range 35 east; thence continuing westerly along the southernmost boundary of the levee 4 works to the point at which the southernmost boundary of the levee 4 works intersects the dividing line between township 48 south, Range 35 east and township 48 south, Range 34 east at the Broward County and Hendry County line; and thence continuing south along said line to the point of beginning; said lands situate, lying and being in Broward County, Florida.

(b) Before the expiration of the 3-year period beginning on the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall—

(1) conduct a cadastral survey of those portions of the Seminole Federal Reservations in Florida not previously surveyed by

Federal  
Register,  
publication.

the Department of the Interior, including all lands taken into trust as reservations under the authority of this Act;

(2) publish the correct legal descriptions of the Seminole Reservations in the Federal Register within 180 days after the survey is completed.

(c) If, pursuant to paragraph 6 of the Settlement Agreement, there is a subsequent agreement between the tribe, the State, and the district providing that lands exchanged with the tribe or acquired by the tribe may be taken into Federal trust as a reservation for the tribe, the Secretary shall accept the transfer of such lands to the United States, to be held in trust for the use and benefit of the tribe pursuant to the terms and conditions of the subsequent agreement unless—

(1) the total amount of land previously taken in trust under this subsection exceeds the amount of land transferred to the State and Water District by the tribe under the Settlement Agreement;

(2) the Secretary determines in writing that either the size, location, or condition of the land, or the terms and conditions under which it is transferred would place an unreasonable burden on the United States as trustee;

(3) the land is not in Florida; or

(4) the land is not agricultural in nature.

(d)(1) Notwithstanding the acquisition of any land under subsection (a) or (c) of this section by the United States in trust for the tribe, the assumption of jurisdiction in favor of the State contained in section 285.16, Florida Statutes, pursuant to section 7 of the Act of August 15, 1953, (67 Stat. 588; Public Law 280), shall continue in full force and effect on such lands unless the United States accepts a retrocession by the State of such civil or criminal jurisdiction in whole or in part under section 403 of the Act of April 11, 1968 (82 Stat. 79; 25 U.S.C. 1323). The laws of Florida relating to alcoholic beverages, gambling, sale of cigarettes, and their successor laws, shall have the same force and effect within said transferred lands as they have elsewhere within the State. The State, with respect to the transferred lands, shall also have jurisdiction over offenses committed by or against Indians under said laws to the same extent the State has jurisdiction over said offenses committed elsewhere within the State.

(2) Nothing in this subsection shall be construed as permitting the exercise of the above jurisdiction by the State regarding matters to which section 1162(b) of title 18, United States Code, and section 1360(b) of title 28, United States Code, apply.

(3) The scope of tribal sovereignty over transferred lands, with the specific exceptions of law relating to cigarettes, gambling and alcohol described in this subsection, shall be as required by applicable law with regard to existing tribal lands held in reservation or Federal trust status. Such transfer shall not confer upon the tribe, or upon the lands within the reservation, any additional water rights. Tribal water rights shall be deemed to be defined in the compact.

#### WATER RIGHTS COMPACT

Alcoholic and  
alcoholic  
beverages.  
Tobacco and  
tobacco  
products.  
Law  
enforcement  
and crime.

Water.

25 USC 1772e.

SEC. 7. The compact defining the scope of Seminole water rights and their utilization by the tribe shall have the force and effect of Federal law for the purposes of enforcement of the rights and obligations of the tribe.

## JUDICIAL REVIEW

SEC. 8. (a) Notwithstanding any other provision of law, any action to contest the constitutionality of this Act shall be barred unless the complaint is filed within 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act. Exclusive jurisdiction over any such action is hereby vested in the United States District Court for the southern district of Florida.

25 USC 1772f.

(b) Notwithstanding any present immunity from suit enjoyed by any of the parties, jurisdiction regarding any controversy arising under the Settlement Agreement or compact or private agreement between the tribe and any third party entered into under authority of the compact is hereby vested in the United States District Court for the southern district of Florida. Such jurisdiction shall be exclusive except that the court shall not have jurisdiction to award money damages against the State, the district or the tribe. Proceedings in the district court under this section shall be expedited consistent with sound judicial discretion.

## REVOCATION OF SETTLEMENT

SEC. 9. In the event the Settlement Agreement or any part thereof is ever invalidated—

25 USC 1772g.

(1) the transfers, waivers, releases, relinquishments and any other commitments made by the State, the tribe, or the district in the Settlement Agreement shall no longer be of any force or effect;

(2) section 5 shall be inapplicable as if such section was never enacted with respect to the lands, interests in lands, or natural resources of the tribe and its members; and

(3) the approvals of prior transfers and the extinguishment of claims and aboriginal title of the tribe otherwise effected by section 5 shall be void ab initio.

## EFFECTIVE DATE

SEC. 10. This Act shall take effect upon the date of its enactment.

25 USC 1772  
note.

Approved December 31, 1987.

LEGISLATIVE HISTORY—S. 1684 (H.R. 3290):

HOUSE REPORTS: No. 100-488 accompanying H.R. 3290 (Comm. on Interior and Insular Affairs).

SENATE REPORTS: No. 100-258 (Select Comm. on Indian Affairs).

CONGRESSIONAL RECORD, Vol. 133 (1987):

Dec. 17, considered and passed Senate.

Dec. 18, considered and passed House.