# IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE WESTERN DISTRICT OF OKLAHOMA

STATE OF OKLAHOMA, ex rel. W.A "DREW" EDMONDSON, ATTORNEY GENERAL OF	) Case No.:
OKLAHOMA,	)
Plaintiff,	) )
VS.	)
NATIVE WHOLESALE SUPPLY, a Corporation charted by the Sac and Fox Tribe of Oklahoma,	) )
Defendant.	)

#### **NOTICE OF REMOVAL**

Pursuant to 28 U.S.C. §§ 1331, 1441 and 1446, Defendant, Native Wholesale Supply ("NWS"), files this Notice of Removal to remove the above-captioned action from the District Court of Oklahoma County, State of Oklahoma, to the United States District Court for the Western District of Oklahoma, and, for the purpose only of removing this action, states as follows:

1. NWS is the sole defendant in the above captioned civil action that was commenced on or about May 29, 2008 in the District Court of Oklahoma County, State of Oklahoma, No. CJ-2008-4942, by plaintiff State of Oklahoma, *ex rel*. W.A "Drew" Edmondson, Attorney General of Oklahoma (the "State of Oklahoma"). The action was commenced by the State of Oklahoma filing the Petition that is attached hereto as Exhibit A. The Petition and an Alias Summons issued on June 27, 2008 (also attached as Exhibit A) were served on NWS on July 7, 2008. Pursuant to 28 U.S.C. §§ 1331, 1441 and 1446, NWS hereby removes this action to the United States District Court for the Western District of Oklahoma.

#### Grounds for Removal

2. This action is removed pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 1331. This Court would have had original jurisdiction of this action as the State of Oklahoma's allegations implicate federal law. Specifically, NWS is chartered by the Sac and Fox Nation of Native Americans. NWS is wholly owned by a member of the Seneca Nation and conducts business solely on Seneca land, and with Native Americans in the United States. Hence, the Petition implicates the Commerce Clause of the United States Constitution as it raises issues regarding the regulation of an out of state business (including extraterritorial application of state law) and the Indian Commerce Clause. Therefore, the claims in the Petition necessarily involve the Constitution of the United States and questions of federal law. In addition, the Petition implicates the Due Process Clause of the United States Constitution, as the State of Oklahoma has unilaterally declared cigarettes distributed by NWS to be contraband, without NWS ever being afforded a hearing to challenge that designation.

#### Timeliness of Removal

3. This removal is timely pursuant to 28 U.S.C. 1446(b) as this Notice of Removal is being filed within thirty days after NWS was served with the State of Oklahoma's Petition, and is being removed within one year of commencement of this action on or about May 29, 2008.

#### Process, Pleadings and Orders Served Upon NWS to Date

4. To date, the only process, pleadings and orders that have been served upon NWS in this action are the Petition and the Alias Summons dated June 27, 2008, copies of which are attached hereto as Exhibit A.

# Conformance with Removal Requirements

5. Pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 1446(d), NWS will give prompt written notice of the filing of this Notice of Removal to the State of Oklahoma, and will file a true and accurate copy of this Notice of Removal with the Clerk of the District Court of Oklahoma County, State of Oklahoma. Pursuant to LCvR 81.2 of the Western District of Oklahoma, a copy of the State Court Docket Sheet is attached hereto as Exhibit B.

WHEREFORE, NWS prays that this action be removed from the District Court of Oklahoma County, State of Oklahoma, to the United States District Court for the Western District of Oklahoma, and that the United States District Court for the Western District of Oklahoma issue such orders and processes as may be necessary to preserve its jurisdiction over this matter and bring before it all parties necessary for adjudication of this matter.

Respectfully submitted,

s/ Marc Edwards

Marc Edwards, OBA # 10281 Robert N. Sheets, OBA # 8152

Douglas M. Todd, OBA # 15378

Phillips McFall McCaffrey McVay & Murrah, P.C.

Thirteenth Floor, Corporate Tower

101 N. Robinson

Oklahoma City, Oklahoma 73102

Telephone: (405) 235-4100

Facsimile: (405) 235-4133

ATTORNEYS FOR DEFENDANT

#### OF COUNSEL:

Leonard Violi
LAW OFFICES OF LEONARD VIOLI, LLC

910 E. Boston Post Road Mamaroneck, New York 10543 Telephone: (914) 698-6200

Facsimile: (914) 698-6207 lenvioli@violilaw.com

# **CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE**

I hereby certify that on August 6, 2008, I electronically transmitted the attached document to the Clerk of Court using the ECF System for filing and transmittal of a Notice of Electronic Filing to the following ECF registrants:

Clyde Kirk — <u>Clyde.Kirk@aog.ok.gov</u> Ryan.Chaffin — Ryan <u>Chaffin@aog.ok.gov</u>

s/Marc Edwards

IN THE DISTRICT CO	JURI OF OKTAHOMA	
STATI	E OF OKLAHOMA	FILED IN THE DISTRICT COUR; OKLAHOMA COUNTY, OKLA.
STATE OF OKLAHOMA, ex rel. W.A.	)	•
"DREW" EDMONDSON, ATTORNEY		MAY 2 9 2008
GENERAL OF OKLAHOMA,	1	•
,	Ś	PATRICIA PRESLEY, COURT CLERK
Plaintiff,	)	DEPUTY
<b>vs.</b> -	) Case No.	
NATIVE WHOLESALE SUPPLY, a	)	
Corporation chartered by the Sac and Fox	(	1 _9468-4942
Tribe of Oklahoma,	) <b>S</b>	
Defendant.	)	FILED
	DA'	TE 7-3-08
	PETITION	SECRETARY
	a war a service at the fa-	SAC & FOX NATION
Comes now the State of Oklahoma	i, ex rel. W.A. "Drew" Edit	lonoson, Attorney General of
		July Marman fellen

#### JURISDICTION AND VENUE

Oklahoma and alleges and states as follows:

- 1. This is a civil action seeking disgorgement and payment to the State of the gross proceeds realized by Native Wholesale Supply from cigarette sales made in violation of the Oklahoma Tobacco Master Settlement Agreement Complementary Act ("Complementary Act"), 68
  O.S. § 360.1 et seq...
- 2. The Defendant, Native Wholesale Supply, is a closely held corporation chartered by the Sac and Fox Tribe of Oklahoma. On information and belief, Native Wholesale Supply has its principal place of business located on the Cattaraugus Indian Reservation in the State of New York.
- 3. This Court has jurisdiction over the Defendant, pursuant to the Complementary Act, because it has knowingly sold, transported or caused to be transported, and imported or caused to be imported, cigarettes for sale in Oklahoma, thereby transacting business within this state and availing itself of the privilege of conducting activities within the state.

EXHIBIT

Seption A

4. Because the Defendant is a non-resident of the State of Oklahoma venue is proper in this Court pursuant to 12 O.S. §187.

# INTRODUCTION

- 5. As used in this Petition, the term "Case" of cigarettes generally describes a box which contains sixty (60) cartons of cigarettes; the term "Carton" of cigarettes describes a carton that contains ten (10) packages of cigarettes; the term "Package" of cigarettes describes a package which contains 20 individual cigarettes ("sticks"). Therefore, one case of cigarettes typically contains 12,000 individual cigarettes.
- 6. The State of Oklahoma Complementary Act, 68 O.S. § 360.4(C)(1) -(2) requires that a tobacco product manufacturer and its brand families must be listed on the Directory of Compliant Tobacco Manufacturers maintained by the Oklahoma Attorney General before cigarettes can lawfully be sold in the state. Title 68 O.S. §360.7 (E) of the Complementary Act further provides:

It shall be unlawful for a person to:

- a. sell or distribute cigarettes, or
- b. acquire, hold, own, possess, transport, import, or cause to be imported cigarettes that the person knows or should know are intended for distribution or sale in the state in violation of the Master Settlement Agreement Complementary Act.
- 7. Title 68 O.S. §360.8 (G) of the Complementary Act provides that upon a finding that a person has violated the Tobacco Master Settlement Agreement Complementary Act, "the court shall order any profit, gain, gross proceeds, or other benefit from the violation to be forfeited and paid to the State Treasurer for deposit in the Tobacco Settlement Endowment Trust Fund."
- 8. Title 68 O.S. §360.8 (F) of the Complementary Act provides that in any action brought by the state to enforce the Master Settlement Agreement Complementary Act, the state

shall be entitled to recover its costs of investigation, expert witness fees, costs of the action, and reasonable attorneys fees.

# **VIOLATIONS BY DEFENDANT**

- 9. "Seneca" cigarettes are a brand of cigarettes manufactured by Grand River Enterprises Six Nations, Ltd., a Canadian Limited Liability Corporation (hereinafter "GRE"). Since August 2006, GRE and its brand families have not been listed on the Oklahoma Attorney General's Directory and its products have not been approved for sale within the State of Oklahoma.
- 10. From or about February, 2007 through May, 2008, Native Wholesale Supply knowingly and unlawfully sold, distributed, acquired, held, owned, possessed, transported, imported, or caused to be imported for sale approximately 9,476 cases or 113,262,000 individual sticks of contraband Seneca brand cigarettes manufactured by GRE to Muscogee Creek Nation Wholesale located in the State of Oklahoma when it knew or should have known that those cigarettes were intended for distribution or sale in the state in violation of the Complementary Act. Native Wholesale Supply's gross receipts from its sales to Muscogee Creek Nation Wholesale was approximately \$5,093,331.00.

# REQUEST FOR RELIEF

Wherefore, Plaintiff requests (1) that the court find that Defendant violated the Oklahoma Master Settlement Agreement Complementary Act by its above alleged actions; (2) that the court enter an injunction preliminarily and permanently enjoining the Defendant from violating the Complementary Act; (3) that the court order Defendant to account for all Seneca and other brands of cigarettes which it has sold, distributed, acquired, held, owned, possessed, transported, imported,

or caused to be imported for sale in the State of Oklahoma from August 2006, to the present; (4) that judgment be entered against Defendant in the amount of any profit, gain, gross receipts or other benefit it received from all Seneca and other brands of cigarettes it sold within the State of Oklahoma since August 2006, in violation of the Master Settlement Agreement Complementary Act, estimated to be in excess of \$5,093,331.00; and (5) that Plaintiff recover the cost of investigation, expert witness fees, costs, reasonable attorney fees, and such other and further relief to which Plaintiff may be entitled.

Respectfully submitted,

E. Clyde Kirk OB 6 #10579 Ryan R. Chaffin, OBA #19430

ASSISTANT ATTORNEYS GENERAL

TOBACCO ENFORCEMENT UNIT

313 Northeast 21<sup>st</sup> Street

Oklahoma City, Okla, 73105

(405) 521-3921 Fax: (405) 522-4534

Clyde.Kirk@oag.ok.gov Rvan.Chaffin@oag.ok.gov

IN THE DISTRICT CO STATE	OURT OF OKLAHOMA COUNTY OF OKLAHOMA
STATE OF OKLAHOMA, ex rel. W.A. "DREW" EDMONDSON, ATTORNEY GENERAL OF OKLAHOMA,	DATE 7-3-08  SECRETARY SAC & FOX NATION
Plaintiff, vs.	Guen Mormed William
NATIVE WHOLESALE SUPPLY, a Corporation chartered by the Sac and Fox Tribe of Oklahoma,	Case No. C5-08-4942_
- Defendant,	)

# **ALIAS SUMMONS**

)

To the above-named Defendant:

NATIVE WHOLESALE SUPPLY c/o GWEN WILBURN, SECRETARY SAC & FOX TRIBE OF OKLAHOMA ROUTE 2, BOX 246 STROUD, OKLAHOMA 74079

You have been sued by the above-named Plaintiff, and you are directed to file a written answer to the attached Petition in the Court at the above address within twenty (20) days after service of this Summons upon you, exclusive to the day of service. Within the same time, a copy of your Answer must be delivered or mailed to the attorney for the Plaintiff.

Unless you answor the Petition within the time stated, judgment will be rendered against you with costs of this action.

Issued this day of June, 2008.

PATRICIA PRESLEY, COURT CLERK

(Seal)

# ATTORNEYS FOR PLAINTIFF:

E. Clyde Kirk OBA #10572
Ryan R. Chaffin, OBA #19430
ASSISTANT ATTORNEYS GENERAL.
TOBACCO ENFORCEMENT UNIT
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Clyde.Kirk@oag.ok.gov
Ryan,Chaffin@cag.ok.gov



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IN THE DISTRICT	COURT IN AND	FOR OKLAHOMA	COUNTY	', OKLAHOM <i>A</i>

STATE OF OKLAHOMA, EX REL.

W.A. DREW EDMONDSON, ATTORNEY GENERAL OF OKLAHOMA,

PLAINTIFF,

No. CJ-2008-4942

(Civil relief more than \$10,000:

OTHER <..DESCRIPTION OF ACTION..>)

VS-

Filed: 05/29/2008

NATIVE WHOLESALE SUPPLY, A CORPORATION CHARTERED BY THE SAC AND FOX TRIBE OF OKLAHOMA, DEFENDANT

Judge: Dixon, Bryan C.

#### **Parties**

Edmondson, Drew , Plaintiff Native Wholesale Supply , Defendant

# **Attorneys**

Attorney

Edwards, Marc(Bar # 10281) Corporate Tower Thirteenth Floor 101 North Robinson Oklahoma City, OK 73102 **Represented Parties** 

Native Wholesale Supply,

KIRK, E. CLYDE(Bar # 10579)
ASSISTANT ATTORNEYS GEN

ASSISTANT ATTORNEYS GÉNENERAL TOBACCO

ENFORCEMENT UNIT 313 NORTHEAST 21ST STREET

OKLAHOMA CITY, OK 73105

SHEETS, ROBERT NOEL(Bar # 8152) Corporate Tower Thirteenth Floor 101 North Robinson Oklahoma City, OK 73102 Edmondson, Drew

Native Wholesale Supply,

#### **Events**

Event Party Docket Reporter

Issues

For cases filed before 1/1/2000, ancillary issues may not appear except in the docket.

Issue # 1. Issue: OTHER <..DESCRIPTION OF ACTION..> (OTHER)

Filed by: Edmondson, Drew Filed Date: 05/29/2008

Party Name: Disposition Information:

EXHIBIT

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# Pending.

# Docket

<b>Date</b> 05-29-2008		Count  1	Party  NN \$10,000 INIT	<b>Serial #</b> 54245118	Entry Date May 29 2008 4:13:03:043PM		\$ 0.00
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End of Transmission.

\*5JS 44 (Rev. 12/07)

#### **CIVIL COVER SHEET**

The JS 44 civil cover sheet and the information contained herein neither replace nor supplement the filing and service of pleadings or other papers as required by law, except as provided by local rules of court. This form, approved by the Judicial Conference of the United States in September 1974, is required for the use of the Clerk of Court for the purpose of initiating the civil docket sheet. (SEE INSTRUCTIONS ON THE REVERSE OF THE FORM.)

I. (a) PLAINTIFFS			DEFENDANTS				
State of Oklahoma, ex i General of Oklahoma,	rel. W.A. "Drew" Edm	ondson, Attorney	/ <b>E</b>	Native Wholes	ale Supply		
(b) County of Residence	of First Listed Plaintiff	Oklahoma	County of Residence	of First Listed Defendant			
(EXCEPT IN U.S. PLAINTIFF CASES)				Ť	(IN U.S. PLAINTIFF CASES	S ONLY)	
					ND CONDEMNATION CASES, U DINVOLVED.	USE THE LOCATION OF THE	
(c) Attorney's (Firm Name	e, Address, and Telephone Numb	er)		Attorneys (If Known)	ı		
See Attached	-,	,		See Attached			
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152 Recovery of Defaulted Student Loans	Liability  ☐ 340 Marine	Liability PERSONAL PROPER		0 Occupational Safety/Health	☐ 840 Trademark	480 Consumer Credit     490 Cable/Sat TV	
(Excl. Veterans)	☐ 345 Marine Product	370 Other Fraud	□ 69	0 Other		☐ 810 Selective Service	
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190 Other Contract	Product Liability	385 Property Damage		0 Labor/Mgmt, Relations	☐ 863 DIWC/DIWW (405(g))	12 USC 3410	
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#### ATTACHMENT TO CIVIL COVER SHEET

E. Clyde Kirk, Ryan R. Chaffin Assistant Attorney Generals Tobacco Enforcement 313 Northeast 21st Street Oklahoma City, Oklahoma 73105 405-521-3921 Attorneys for Plaintiff

Marc Edwards, Robert N. Sheets, Douglas M. Todd Phillips McFall McCaffrey McVay & Murrah, P.C. Corporate Tower, 13th Floor 101 N. Robinson Oklahoma City, Oklahoma 73102 405-235-4100 Attorneys for Defendant