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UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE EASTERN DISTRICT OF WASHINGTON

CONFEDERATED TRIBES AND BANDS

OF THE YAKAMA NATION,

Plaintiffs,

) DEFENDANT YAKIMA COUNTY'S

V.

) RESPONSE TO PLAINTIFFS'
) MOTION FOR TEMPORARY

ERIC H. HOLDER, JR., Attorney Gene-) RESTRAINING ORDER AND
ral of the United States; et al.,

Defendants.

)

Defendants.

I. Introduction

Since at least the late 1970s, the Yakima County Sheriff's Office has engaged in law enforcement activities on the Yakama Reservation. Plaintiffs seek to use the present motion (ECF No. 227) to force compliance with a recently-adopted tribal ordinance, rather than to preserve the status quo pending resolution of this case on the merits.

The motion is an imprudent use of the TRO process. The motion asks the Court -- on a limited record and under rushed circumstances -- to drastically modify longstanding structural

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aspects of the allocation of jurisdiction between the Yakama

Nation and all defendants, including the Yakima County Sheriff's

Office. There has been no exigent or concrete action, either

leading up to this filing or likely to occur in the absence of

relief, to justify the hasty manner in which this comes before

the Court.

For these reasons, and because of the significance of the requested relief to the literally thousands of people who live within the exterior boundaries of the reservation, the motion should be denied. Plaintiffs cannot establish the criteria for a preliminary injunction as set forth in <u>Winter v. Natural</u>
Resources Defense Council, Inc., 555 U.S. 7 (2008).

All of the issues raised by plaintiffs are pending before this Court as part of the underlying lawsuit between the parties. These claims should be resolved through litigation, after proper briefing and argument, rather than by way of this TRO motion.

II. Background

The Yakama Reservation (the "reservation") consists of some 1.4 million acres of land, much of which is in Yakima County.

(ECF No. 247, Exhibit A). A sizeable majority of permanent residents are not enrolled members of the Yakama Nation. In 1979, the United States Supreme Court observed that "[o]f the

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25,000 permanent residents of the Reservation, 3,074 are members of the Yakima Nation." <u>Washington v. Confederated Bands and</u>
Tribes of the Yakima Indian Nation, 439 U.S. 463, 470 (1979).

In 1989, the United States Supreme Court described the reservation as follows:

. . . roughly 80% is held in trust by the United States for the benefit of the Yakima Nation or individual members of the Tribe. The remaining 20% of the land is owned in fee by Indian or non-Indian owners. Most of the fee land is found in Toppenish, Wapato, and Harrah, the three incorporated towns located in the northeastern part of the reservation. The remaining fee land is scattered throughout the reservation in a "checkerboard" pattern.

Brendale v. Confederated Tribes and Bands of the Yakima Indian Nation, 492 U.S. 408, 415 (1989); see also ECF No. 247, Exhibit C, at 75:2-7).

In 1953, Congress enacted Public Law 280. <u>See Washington</u>, <u>supra</u>. The law authorized the State of Washington to assume jurisdiction over criminal offenses and civil causes of action in Indian country. (<u>Id</u>.) In 1963, the State of Washington exercised this authority and enacted RCW 37.12.010. (<u>Id</u>.)

RCW 37.12.010 extends civil and criminal jurisdiction throughout Indian Country in the State of Washington.

Following enactment of RCW 37.12.010, plaintiffs sued the State of Washington, challenging the validity of its assertion

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valid.

(Id.)

of civil and criminal jurisdiction on the reservation.

<u>Washington</u>, 439 U.S. at 466. In 1979, the United States Supreme

Court ruled that Washington's assumption of jurisdiction was

Since at least the late 1970s, the Yakima County Sheriff's Office (YCSO) has engaged in law enforcement activities on the reservation. (ECF No. 246, at para. 4).

Yakima County Sheriff Ken Irwin characterizes YCSO's operating principles during all relevant times as: (1) respond to calls anywhere in Yakima County; (2) take measures necessary to protect life and property; (3) determine jurisdiction (municipal, tribal or county); and (4) turn over to jurisdictional authority when they arrive on the scene. (Id.).

YCSO responds to approximately 1,000 calls for assistance on the reservation each year. (ECF No. 245, at para. 2).

Because fee land is scattered throughout the reservation in a "checkerboard" pattern, law enforcement officers cannot always know if the address to which they are responding is fee land or trust land. (ECF No. 245, at paras. 3 and 4). In emergent circumstances, YCSO law enforcement officers may not initially take steps to ascertain whether the property is trust land.

During his deposition Deputy Sheriff Alan Klise explained that doing so "would be a bad habit; if it was your son or daughter

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getting hurt, would you care[?]" (ECF No. 247, Exhibit C, at 103:20-22). In non-emergent circumstances, Deputy Sheriff Klise explained his approach as follows: "I'll go up and ask them, Are you enrolled Yakama? And they say yeah. Okay, I'll call tribal [police] for you." (Id. at 104:10-12).

Recently, the Yakama Nation adopted an ordinance providing, in relevant part, that no state actor may enter the reservation unless permitted or invited by the Yakama Tribal Council or Tribal Council Chairman. (ECF No. 233, at para. 4; ECF No. 234, Exhibit A, at § 2011.01.02). A request for permission to enter the reservation should come from the "highest ranking official" of the requesting agency. (Id. at § 2011.01.04). A copy of the request must be sent to the Bureau of Indian Affairs. (Id.)
"At least thirty days (30) should be allowed for an oral or written response[.]" (Id.)

The ordinance establishes no criteria for evaluating a request. There are no constraints whatsoever on the basis by which a request may be denied. And in the event a request is denied, there is no appeal. (Id., at § 2011.01.06). Even the thirty-day clause states an aspirational response time, and is otherwise meaningless.

There is a limited exception for emergent circumstances. ($\underline{\text{Id}}$., at § 2011.01.09). The exception does not contemplate

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routine, non-emergent, law enforcement activities that YCSO has performed for decades.

Some guidance as how plaintiffs interpret emergent circumstances was provided in a letter from Yakama Nation Public Safety Commissioner Kelly M. Rosenow to Yakima County Sheriff Ken Irwin dated May 23, 2011. (ECF No. 246, Exhibit C). Mr. Rosenow explained:

. . . if one of your officers responds to an emergency call, such as a domestic violence disturbance, and after an extended period of time no Yakama Nation police officer is available, the on-scene and responding police officer will be authorized to handle the case as appropriate.

(Id.) (emphasis added).

YCSO law enforcement officers who violate the ordinance - perhaps by not waiting the requisite "extended period of time" before intervening to stop a domestic disturbance - may be subject to civil and criminal penalties. (ECF No. 234, Exhibit A, at § 2011.01.07 and .08).

III. Standard of Review

Plaintiffs seeking a preliminary injunction must establish

(1) that they are likely to succeed on the merits; (2) that they
are likely to suffer irreparable harm in the absence of
preliminary relief; (3) that the balance of equities tips in

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their favor; and (4) that an injunction is in the public interest. Winter, at 7. Although couched in different terms, the standards for a temporary restraining order and a preliminary injunction are essentially identical. Stuhlberg Intern. Sales Co., Inc. v. John D. Brush and Co., Inc., 240 F.3d 832, 839 n. 7 (9th Cir. 2001).

IV. Argument

A. The Court should impose heightened scrutiny to plaintiffs' request for a mandatory injunction.

Plaintiffs seek to alter, rather than preserve, the status quo. (See ECF No. 246, at para. 4). In their proposed order, plaintiffs request that the Court restrain Yakima County from entering the reservation "without complying with applicable Yakama law and procedure." (ECF No. 227-1, at 2-3). But the "applicable Yakama law and procedure" is apparently quite new. (See ECF No. 233 at 1, 9-17) (implying recent adoption and absence of similar ordinance in past). Plaintiffs wish to bootstrap their new ordinance into a claim of legitimacy by means of Court action on this motion. But this reverses the proper order of this Court's review and causes great risk of upheaval in the existing settled allocation of jurisdiction.

To reiterate, the YCSO law enforcement activities have remained largely unchanged for decades.

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Plaintiffs request injunctive relief that is mandatory rather than prohibitory. See Heckler v. Lopez, 463 U.S. 1328, 1333 (1983) (a prohibitory injunction "freezes" the position of the parties until a court can hear the case on the merits); Meghrig v. KFC W., Inc., 516 U.S. 479, 484 (1996) (mandatory injunction "orders" a responsible party to take action.)

Mandatory injunctions are particularly disfavored and courts should be extremely cautious about issuing them. Stanley v. Univ. of Southern California, 13 F.3d 1313, 1320 (9th Cir. 1994); Marlyn Nutraceuticals, Inc. v. Mucos Pharma, 571 F.3d 873, 879 (9th Cir. 2009) (mandatory injunction should not be granted "unless extreme or very serious damage will result[.]").

Plaintiffs have not identified any conduct by YCSO that would alter the status quo. As to harm, plaintiffs allege only that if the Court denies them injunctive relief, "the County will continue to enter the Yakama Reservation[.]" (ECF No. 237, at 8).

Under the heightened criteria applied with respect to mandatory injunctions, no injunction may issue unless the Court finds that "the facts and law clearly favor the moving party." Anderson v. United States, 612 F.2d 1112, 1114 (9th Cir. 1979). As outlined below, plaintiffs cannot make this case.

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B. Plaintiffs cannot establish the criteria for a preliminary injunction.

 Plaintiffs are not likely to suffer irreparable harm in the absence of preliminary relief.

To obtain a preliminary injunction, plaintiffs must demonstrate "that there exists a significant threat of irreparable injury." Oakland Tribune, Inc. v. Chronical Pub.

Co., 762 F.2d 1374, 1376 (9th Cir. 1985).

Delay in seeking a preliminary injunction "implies lack of urgency and irreparable harm." <u>Id</u>., at 1377. The predicate to a request for a preliminary injunction is that "there is an urgent need for speedy action to protect a plaintiff's rights." <u>Lydo Enterprises</u>, <u>Inc. v. City of Los Vegas</u>, 745 F.2d 1211, 1213 (9th Cir. 1984) (citation omitted). A plaintiff who sleeps on his or her rights "demonstrates the lack of need for speedy action[.]" <u>Id</u>.

In <u>Tough Traveler</u>, <u>Ltd. v. Outbound Products</u>, 60 F.3d 964, 968 (2nd Cir. 1995), the Court of Appeals held that the district court erred by finding irreparable injury where the plaintiff waited nine months to file a lawsuit, and then another four months before moving for a preliminary injunction. <u>Id</u>. at 968. In <u>Lydo</u>, the Court of Appeals gave weight to the plaintiff's delay of five years before challenging a municipal ordinance when measuring the claim of urgency. <u>Id</u>. at 1214. In <u>Winter</u>,

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the Court viewed with skepticism a claim of irreparable injury where the challenged conduct was not a "new type of activity," but rather conduct that had been occurring on a regular basis for 40 years. Id. at 23.

As in Winter, the conduct giving rise to the motion in this case is not new, but rather has been occurring on a regular basis for decades. (ECF No. 246, at para. 4). Plaintiffs waited approximately a year after filing their complaint before filing this motion. (See ECF No. 1). Plaintiffs have no explanation for this year-long delay, other than to say vaguely that "[o]nly in recent days has the Nation come to fully appreciate the extent" of Yakima County's purported violation of tribal procedures. (ECF No. 237, at 10). Yakima County's law enforcement procedures have remained essentially unchanged for more than 30 years. (ECF No. 246, at para. 4). Plaintiffs' explanation is superficial given the magnitude of the relief plaintiffs request.

The instant circumstances are distinguishable from those in Muckleshoot Indian Tribe v. Hall, 698 F. Supp. 1504 (W.D. Wash. 1988), relied upon by plaintiffs, where the court found a potential for irreparable harm arising from the proposed construction of a 1,200 slip marina that would impair treaty fishing rights.

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In sum, plaintiffs have provided no credible explanation as to why this motion has been filed now, as opposed to any other time during the year-long pendency of this lawsuit.

Plaintiffs have likewise not shown any credible harm that will arise should the motion be denied. Yakima County recognizes plaintiffs' submissions regarding various specific law enforcement activities over the past several months. (See ECF No. 235, 236). But there is no evidence at all to show how these particular incidents represent a change or deviation from the prior longstanding allocation of jurisdiction between the Yakama Nation and Yakima County.

2. Plaintiffs are not likely to succeed on the merits.

Plaintiffs cannot show they are "likely" to prevail on the merits, and for this reason are not entitled to a preliminary injunction. Winter, 555 U.S. at 20.

Congress has plenary authority over Indian affairs, including the authority to limit tribal sovereignty. U.S. Const. art. I, § 8, cl. 3. In an exercise of this power, Congress authorized the State of Washington to assert civil and criminal jurisdiction over the reservation. Public Law 280, at 67 Stat. 588. The State of Washington has done so. RCW 37.12.010. The

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United States Supreme Court has upheld this exertion of jurisdiction as valid. Washington, supra.

Fundamentally, the claims brought by plaintiffs in this lawsuit amount to a procedurally rash collateral attack on Public Law 280 and RCW 37.12.010.

Further, and separately from the above discussion of Public Law 280, a different line of Indian law stands for the proposition that "...resolution of conflicts between the jurisdiction of state and tribal courts has depended, absent a governing Act of Congress, on whether the state action infringed on the rights of reservation Indians to make their own laws and be ruled by them." Fisher v. District Court of Sixteenth

Judicial Dist. of Mont., 424 U.S. 382, 386 (1976). This analysis of conflicts of law within Indian Country departs from the view that "'the laws of [a State] can have no force' within reservation boundaries." Nevada v. Hicks, 533 U.S. 353, 361-62 (2001) (quoting White Mountain Apache Tribe v. Bracker, 448 U.S. 136, 141 (1980)).

A salient, and aptly titled, treatment of this issue can be found at: Reynolds, <u>Adjudication in Indian County: The</u>

<u>Confusing Parameters of State, Federal and Tribal Jurisdiction</u>,

38 Wm. & Mary L. Rev. 539 (1997).

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Plaintiffs mischaracterize the issue before the Court as whether ongoing YCSO law enforcement activities infringe on plaintiffs' right to make their own laws and be ruled by them.

(ECF No. 237, at 11-13). In support of this argument, plaintiffs cite several cases that do not involve Public Law 280 and are largely beside the point. See e.g., South Dakota v. Cummings, 679 N.W.2d 484 (S.D. 2004); Miccosukee Tribe of Indians v. United States, 2000 WL 35623105 (S.D. Fla. 2000); Tracy v. Superior Court, 810 P.2d 1030 (Ariz. 1991); Arizona ex. rel. Merrill v. Turtle, 413 F.2d 683 (9th Cir. 1969).

Plaintiffs also rely upon Saginaw Chippewa Indian Tribe of Michigan v. Granholm, 2010 WL 518114 (E.D. Mich. 2010), in which the court approved a voluntary agreement between a tribe and state and local authorities relating to service of search warrants within a "tribal enclave." The court did not indicate whether the state had assumed criminal jurisdiction under Public Law 280, and did not consider whether the tribe could unilaterally impose access requirements on state law enforcement. The court merely held that the settlement agreement represented a reasonable compromise between the parties. Id. at 3.

Yakima County acknowledges the holding in <u>State v. Mathews</u>, 986 P.2d 323 (1999), that "in the absence of an established tribal procedure," the state court's issuance and execution of a

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warrant for a search within a reservation did not unlawfully undermine the tribe's self-governance or conflict with federal law. Id. at 337.

But <u>Matthews</u> is not particularly useful here because: 1) it is not an injunction case; 2) it did not address what it meant by an "established tribal procedure," which precludes comparison with the pertinent Yakama Nation ordinance; and 3) its analysis is cutting-edge, to the point of being novel, and has never been endorsed by any federal appellate court.

The case law cited by plaintiffs obscures the actual impact of the 2011 ordinance. Under the ordinance, the ability of the YCSO to exercise civil and criminal jurisdiction (including service of process/warrants) on the reservation is subject to the unfettered discretion of the Yakama Tribal Council or Tribal Council Chairman. There are no standards or criteria that specify the circumstances under which tribal authorities will grant or deny YCSO permission to enter the reservation. The decision is not subject to appeal.

Plaintiffs' argument is not likely to succeed. As observed by the United States Supreme Court, "if a tribe can affix penalties to acts done under the immediate direction of the state government, and in obedience to its laws, the operation of the state government may at any time be arrested by the will of the

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tribe." Nevada v. Hicks, 533 U.S. 533 (2001) (internal quotation and brackets omitted) (quoting <u>Tennessee v. Davis</u>, 100 U.S. 257, 263 (1879)).

As the foregoing illustrates, the issues raised by plaintiffs are complex and weighty. Plaintiffs' motion, without coming out and saying so, entices the Court into a maze of jurisdictional interplay between Public Law 280, RCW 37.12.010, and background principles of Indian sovereignty. The complexity is considerably heightened because the answers to these matters of jurisdiction may not be uniform across all the kinds of activity posed by plaintiffs' claims.

The effectuation of service of process, for instance, or questions of extradition, may not implicate identical legal and factual considerations. See, e.g., Nevada, 533 U.S. at 363-64 ("The Court's reference to 'process' in Utah & Northern R. Co. and Kagama, and the Court's concern in Kagama over possible federal encroachment on state prerogatives, suggest state authority to issue search warrants in cases such as the one before us.")

And neither topic ("extradition" or "process") may prove to be equivalent to whatever it is that plaintiffs mean by their catchall phrase "assert criminal jurisdiction." (See ECF No. 237 at 1). The Court will appreciate that Indian law is not so

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facile as plaintiffs' strategically streamlined motion supposes. These issues deserve serious briefing on the merits, rather than summary review by way of this expedited motion.

3. The balance of equities tips in favor of Yakima County.

When reviewing this motion, the Court must identify the harms an injunction might cause to Yakima County and weigh these against plaintiffs' threatened injury. Los Angeles Memorial Coliseum Comm'n v. Nat'l Football League, 634 F.2d 1197, 1203 (9th Cir. 1980). An injunction cannot issue unless the plaintiffs establish that the balance of equities tips in their favor. Winter, 555 U.S. at 20.

Issuance of a preliminary injunction will materially degrade the ability of YCSO to conduct law enforcement activities on the reservation. (ECF No. 246, at para. 13; ECF No. 244, at para. 15). The harm a preliminary injunction will cause to Yakima County is real, and includes significant operational difficulties.

YCSO cannot reasonably respond to requests for assistance on the reservation when it does not know whether its officers will be permitted entry. In addition, YCSO cannot always know in advance whether the location at which assistance is sought is trust land or fee land. Nor can YCSO always know in advance if

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the people it finds there will be enrolled or non-enrolled members. (ECF No. 245, at para. 5). These difficulties are magnified by the vague "protocols" issued by plaintiffs with respect to law enforcement efforts on the reservation. (ECF No. 246, Exhibit C).

The harm also potentially includes civil liability for failing to respond to calls coming from the reservation. See e.g., Beal for Martinez v. City of Seattle, 134 Wn.2d 769 (1998) (cause of action premised on failure by City to promptly dispatch officer in response to request for a "civil standby"); Chambers-Castanes v. King County, 100 Wn.2d 275 (1983) (negligence claim premised on tardy police response to assault).

In contrast, plaintiffs' have alleged that YCSO will continue to violate the law and its treaty obligations. (ECF No. 237, at 16 and 18). But plaintiffs possess no evidence tending to show this. Evidence of separate individual events of law enforcement activities is only evidence of the status quo.

Under these circumstances, the balance of equities tips sharply in favor of the County.

4. An injunction is not in the public interest.

The public interest analysis for the issuance of preliminary injunctions requires the Court to consider whether there exists some critical public interest that would be injured

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by the grant of preliminary relief. <u>Alliance for Wild Rockies</u>
v. Cottrell, 632 F.3d 1127 (9th Cir. 2011) (citation omitted).

The interest of the general public in Yakima County to continued law enforcement by YCSO on the reservation is great.

See Branzburg v. Hayes, 408 U.S. 665, 690 (1972) (discussing generally the public interest in law enforcement). The interest is heightened with respect to those members of the public who live on the reservation and are not enrolled members. This group comprises a majority of those living on the reservation.

In the event a preliminary injunction is issued, YCSO will be compelled to comply with the 2011 ordinance. YCSO will no longer be able to respond to non-emergent calls from reservation residents until it has received permission to do so from the Yakama Tribal Council or its Chair. This is an extraordinarily tangible impact. And while the general public is not represented in these proceedings, the Court is required to consider the consequences of its decision as it affects these individuals. Winters, at 24 (Court should pay particular regard for the public consequences in employing the extraordinary remedy of injunction).

Plaintiffs refer to <u>Miccosukee Tribe</u> for the proposition that the public interest favors an injunction. This argument is inaccurate. (See ECF No. 237, at 17-18). The state interest

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advanced in <u>Miccosukee Tribe</u> was the criminal prosecution of a single individual. <u>See</u> 2000 WL 35623105 at 1. In contrast, the preliminary injunction sought by plaintiffs here will impact literally thousands of people living on the reservation, both enrolled and non-enrolled. (ECF No. 245, at para. 15; ECF No. 246, at para. 13).

Issuance of a preliminary injunction is not in the interest of the general public of Yakima County.

C. If the Court issues injunctive relief, the Court should require plaintiffs to post a bond.

If the Court grants relief as sought by plaintiffs, the Court should require plaintiffs to post a security bond pursuant to Fed. R. Civ. P. 65(c). Yakima County will indisputably have tort liability arising from restrictions on its ability to respond in a timely manner to calls for law enforcement assistance arising from the reservation.

Does the Yakama Nation propose to indemnify the County from such risks that may be inflicted upon its own members? The amount of the bond should, at a minimum, be sufficient to cover litigation costs and damages, if any, arising from such claims. Yakima County submits a bond amount of ten million dollars may be appropriate. See Washburn v. City of Federal Way, 2010 WL 5624419 (King County Superior Court Cause No. 09-2-19157-3)

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(jury verdict of \$1,100,000 for police officer failure to properly enforce protective order); see also Mead Johnson & Co. v. Abbott Laboratories, 201 F.3d 883, 888 (7th Cir. 2000) ("When setting the amount of security, district courts should err on the high side.").

V. Conclusion

For the foregoing reasons, plaintiffs' Motion for Temporary Restraining Order and Preliminary Injunction should be denied. DATED THIS 13th day of March, 2012.

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CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I hereby certify that on March 13, 2012, I filed the foregoing with the Clerk of the Court using the CM/ECF System which will send notification of such filing to the following:

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