

Reappropriate Opposes Fence Construction at Historic Tule Lake WWII Camp Site

TO:

Mitch Crosby

Modoc County Road Commissioner

202 West 4th Street

Alturas, CA 96101

(530) 233-6412

mitchcrosby@co.modoc.ca.us

RE:

TULELAKE AIRPORT PERIMETER FENCE PROJECT

October 2, 2017

Dear Mr. Crosby,

As founder and editor of Reappropriate – one of the Asian American community’s foremost digital media outlets – I write this letter in deep opposition to the Federal Aviation Administration’s plans to construct a perimeter fence around Tulelake Municipal Airport that will render a significant portion of the historic Tule Lake World War II (WWII) incarceration camp site inaccessible.

During WWII, the Tule Lake camp held nearly 19,000 Japanese nationals and Japanese American citizens under particularly harsh and militaristic conditions. As a camp designated to hold perceived troublemakers, Tule Lake served as a nexus point of Japanese American camp resistance during the 1940’s; as such, Tule Lake holds particular significance even within WWII Japanese American incarceration history.

In the more than 70 years since Tule Lake closed its gates, the history of Japanese American incarceration has faded further and further from this nation’s memory. And yet, given the current political turmoil, that history could not be more relevant. The proposed perimeter fence will significantly compromise the teaching and learning of that history: it will cut through the middle of the Tule Lake site, making it appear far smaller than it was. The fence will also render inaccessible significant portions of the Tule Lake camp site that have both educational and sentimental value to students and camp survivors alike.

We cannot allow America to forget the shameful history of Japanese American incarceration, particularly in these increasingly troubled times. I urge you to please reconsider the plans to erect the perimeter fence around Tulelake Municipal Airport, and instead choose to preserve the integrity of the historic Tule Lake incarceration camp site for current and future students of American and Asian American history.

Sincerely,

Jenn Fang
Founder / Editor, Reappropriate