

MACY'S * FLYING * SERVICE

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1965

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Nick S. Macy

Owner

Macy's Flying Service Inc.

Thursday, June 23, 2016

H.R 4387 "Tule Lake National Historic Site Establishment Act of 2016"

June 21, 2016

The Honorable Tom McClintock
2331 Rayburn House Office Building
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Mr. McClintock,

My name is Nick Macy. I am the owner and operator of Macy's Flying Service in Tulelake, California. A major part of my business is conducted from the Tulelake Airport. I am here to represent my community in our desire to keep the airport, which is the vital link in sustaining agricultural employment, providing agricultural services and growing our local economy.

Currently, all of the focus has been on the internment camp; however, the WWII veterans who homesteaded in Tulelake have a story rich in history also. After the war, hundreds of veterans were granted homesteads. These men and women came from all parts of the United States to settle in the Tulelake area, to farm and raise their families. This was not an easy life. Men and women worked together to move the barracks from the interment camps to their homesteads to make into their homes, one of which I was raised in. They worked the land and endured killing frost in the summer and choking dust storms in the spring. They built schools, stores, and even the airport I am fighting to continue.

The original site of the internment camp was meant to be 2 miles south of where it is today. Unrelenting rain in the spring of 1942, made the ground wet and muddy. Neither machinery nor men could move in this lake bottom muck, so construction abruptly halted. The site was moved to a higher elevation with sandy ground. This came to be a very significant change of plans because when the internment camp closed in March 1946, all of the barracks and other building structures were moved to other locations in the valley. What was left of the internment camp was just bare ground, with a few structures (including the jail) cement structures for the sewer systems and some cement foundations.

This wide-open ground with sandy soil was perfect for building an airport. Agricultural land was being developed at a fast pace and to keep up with the farming demands, agricultural aircraft became the answer. The community agreed that an airport must be built. Several veterans petitioned and received the airport grounds as signed by President Harry S. Truman in 1952. It is because the airport was built that there is any semblance of the internment camp, as the alternate plan was to sub divide the property which would have destroyed the footprint of the camp.

The airport grew over time, and in 1964, it was purchased by my father, who was a B-24 instructor in the Army Air Corp, and retired as a Lt. Colonel. I took over the flying service in 1985. At that time, I had 3 employees. Today, Macy's Flying Service employs over 35 people. I am one of the biggest non-government employers left in Modoc County.

Today, the Tulelake Airport is our home base. It is centrally located in some of the most productive ground anywhere in the world. We cover over 300 square miles and 3 states in order to provide service to our growers. We are licensed agronomists providing recommendations to growers on the use of fertilizers and farm chemicals on a wide variety of crops, which includes both organic and conventionally produced commodities.

The Park Service, under the law, brought forth as an executive order designated by President George W. Bush, named the Tule Lake Unit, World War II Valor in the Pacific National Monument. This executive order designated almost 40 acres of ground around the old jail cell. It also included another 900 acres, which is a peninsula in the middle of the valley. It is the communities feeling that a monument of 940 acres is sufficient to establish a lesson in history that the wrongs done are never repeated again.

I am here to state my story of success, to protect my business and the wonderful people that I employ while providing services to over 900 family farms. Within the last few years, one of my greatest pleasures was seeing some of my employees retire. This may sound trivial, but for a small business to have people retire means that we have provided good paying jobs for a long time. I want to continue my business at the Tulelake Airport so my children, nieces, nephews and employees will have the same chances I did.

Our community has always supported the Park Service constructing a site on the property they have in their possession now; to properly tell the story of the men and women who were incarcerated, so that this wrong is never repeated.

After 64 years of vital service, our story should not be about how much land can be taken away from a community.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Nick S. Macy", with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Nick S. Macy
Owner
Macy's Flying Service, Inc.