

# Alabama-Coushatta Texas Land Claims and Pending Damages Awaiting Execution



- The Alabama-Coushatta sued the United States on Nov. 29, 1983.
- The claim came under the Indians Claims Commission Act for 'the taking by the United States of land owned or occupied by such tribes without payment for such lands of compensation agreed to by such tribes.'
- This area of land includes 6.4 million acres of all or part of 12 Texas Counties including **Montgomery, Walker, Angelina, Hardin, Jasper, Liberty, Newton, Orange, Polk, San Jacinto, Trinity and Tyler**
- In 1996, after years of appeals, the Federal Review Panel found for the Tribe.
- The Federal Review Panel found that:
  - The U.S. should have been aware settlers were encroaching
  - The U.S. knowing failed to protect the Tribe's land
  - The U.S. did not act fairly and honorably.
- The Court ordered the U.S. government to pay full monetary compensation to the Tribe for the 3,478,384 acres of the Tribe's aboriginal lands taken by non-Indian settlers after 1845, through to the time that the U.S. lawfully extinguished the Tribe's aboriginal rights to such lands in 1954.
- This ruling means that the U.S. government must pay the members of the Tribe the value of all the oil, timber, and natural gas on nearly 3.5 million acres of land in East Texas that they were denied the opportunity to sell for the 109 years between 1845-1954.
- The U.S. Dept. of Justice is reviewing the claim and then Congress must approve of any settlement. It is estimated that the judgment is worth over \$250 million.