

Ocmulgee Mounds

National Park Service
U.S. Department of Interior

Ocmulgee Mounds NHP



The Muscogee (Creek) Nation Today



HISTORY

During the late 1820s and early 1830s, thousands of Muscogee (Creek) Indians living in the southeast were forced to relocate to Indian Territory. They were allocated 4,824 square miles of land. In 1867, the Muscogee (Creek) began operating under the guidance of a written constitution and code of laws. The city of Okmulgee was established as the capital, named after the original Muscogee (Creek) Capital in Georgia. The Principal Chief and National Council ran the affairs of the nation from Okmulgee. In 1898 the Curtis Act dissolved tribal government, and in 1907 Indian lands became part of the new state of Oklahoma. During the 1930s, the Indian Reorganization Act granted the right of Indian tribes to adopt a constitution subject to the approval of the Secretary of the Interior. Two years later, the Oklahoma Indian Welfare Act gave Indians the right to incorporate and to establish cooperatives.

GOVERNMENT

During the 1930s, Muscogee (Creek) government was based in various Tribal Towns. A national system slowly developed, and in 1979 a new constitution was adopted by the people. This new constitution recognized chartered Muscogee (Creek) communities which serve as local government units within the national system.

Today, the Muscogee (Creek) Nation is the third largest federally recognized tribe in the United States. Like the United States government, the Muscogee (Creek) government is composed of executive, legislative and judicial branches. The Executive Branch administers a variety of service programs for their people. The Division of Human Development provides education and vocational training. The

Division of Community Services provides hospitals and clinics, and the Division of Tribal Affairs oversees Tribal Lands, Agri-Business and Natural Resources. Law Enforcement is under the Lighthouse Commission.

The Executive Branch includes the Chief and National Council. The nation is divided into voting districts, and representatives to the Council are elected by district. Elections for Principal Chief and Second Chief are held every four years while National Council Representatives are elected every two years. Tribal offices are located in a circular, earth-embanked building patterned after the Earth Lodge at Ocmulgee Mounds National Historical Park.

SOCIETY

Despite the conveniences, technology, and influences of the twentieth century, the Muscogee (Creek) people maintain many traditional values. Family ties are strong as values and beliefs continue to be passed down from generation to generation. Tribal Towns and ceremonial grounds, along with the mikko (Town Chief), still exist. Each ceremonial ground is the site for sacred ceremonies like the Green Corn, a ritual

that dates to pre-removal times. Life in the Muscogee (Creek) Nation in many ways is no different from anywhere else in the United States. Children go to school, blue jeans are common, and individuals go to various churches and have varied political beliefs. A common heritage, however, binds the people together. It is this heritage, this special culture, that makes the Muscogee (Creek) Nation what it is today.