

Executive Order of January 9, 1873

An Executive Order issued on January 9, 1873 by President Ulysses S. Grant established the Tule River Indian Reservation at its present location, about 15 miles east of Porterville, in the foothills of the Sierras.

The Madden Farm near Porterville had comprised 1,280 acres of gently rolling land of which 300 acres were easily cultivated.

The new reservation comprised about 48,000 acres. It was extremely mountainous with no more than about 200 acres capable of irrigation in small, isolated patches. The Indians resisted moving from their "Old Homes." Oral histories passed down from the elders on the Tule River Reservation report that the cavalry was used to complete the relocation. Only 180 Indians could be induced to remain on the rocky barren reservation.

Executive Order of October 3, 1873

Inspectors sent from Washington, D.C. noted the worthlessness of the new reservation for farming. On October 3, 1873, President Grant issued a second executive order that about doubled the size of the reservation by resetting its northern boundary to the drainage between the Middle and North Forks of the Tule River. This established the reservation more firmly in the traditional territory of Yaudanchi tribe.

Although reservation lands were withdrawn from the public domain and were no longer available for settlement, title to certain lands within the new boundaries did pass into private non-Indian ownership. As a result of settlers' protests, in 1878, the boundaries were changed yet again. President Rutherford B. Hayes returned to the public domain all the additional lands set aside by the previous executive order and cut the reservation to its original size.