
2023



ANNUAL REPORT

**WILTON
RANCHERIA
TRIBAL
COURT**

Prepared by:
**Chief Judge
Christine Williams**

ABOUT COURTS

The Constitution of Wilton Rancheria provides that the judicial power of the Tribe shall be vested in the Tribal Court. The Wilton Rancheria's Judicial Branch consists of the Tribal Court, The Appellate Panel, and the Traditional Court. Together they are known as the Wilton Rancheria Courts. These three courts work together to ensure a fair and accessible system of justice. Transparency, accuracy, consistency, and fairness will be their foundation.



OUR JOURNEY

As Miwok and Nisenan people of Wilton Rancheria, original stewards of the Sacramento Valley and Foothills, we shall protect and enhance our Tribal sovereignty, cultural traditions, and homelands. By promoting health, wellness, economic success, and education, the Tribe will continue to build a sovereign nation that honors its history and ancestors, while securing the future for following generations.

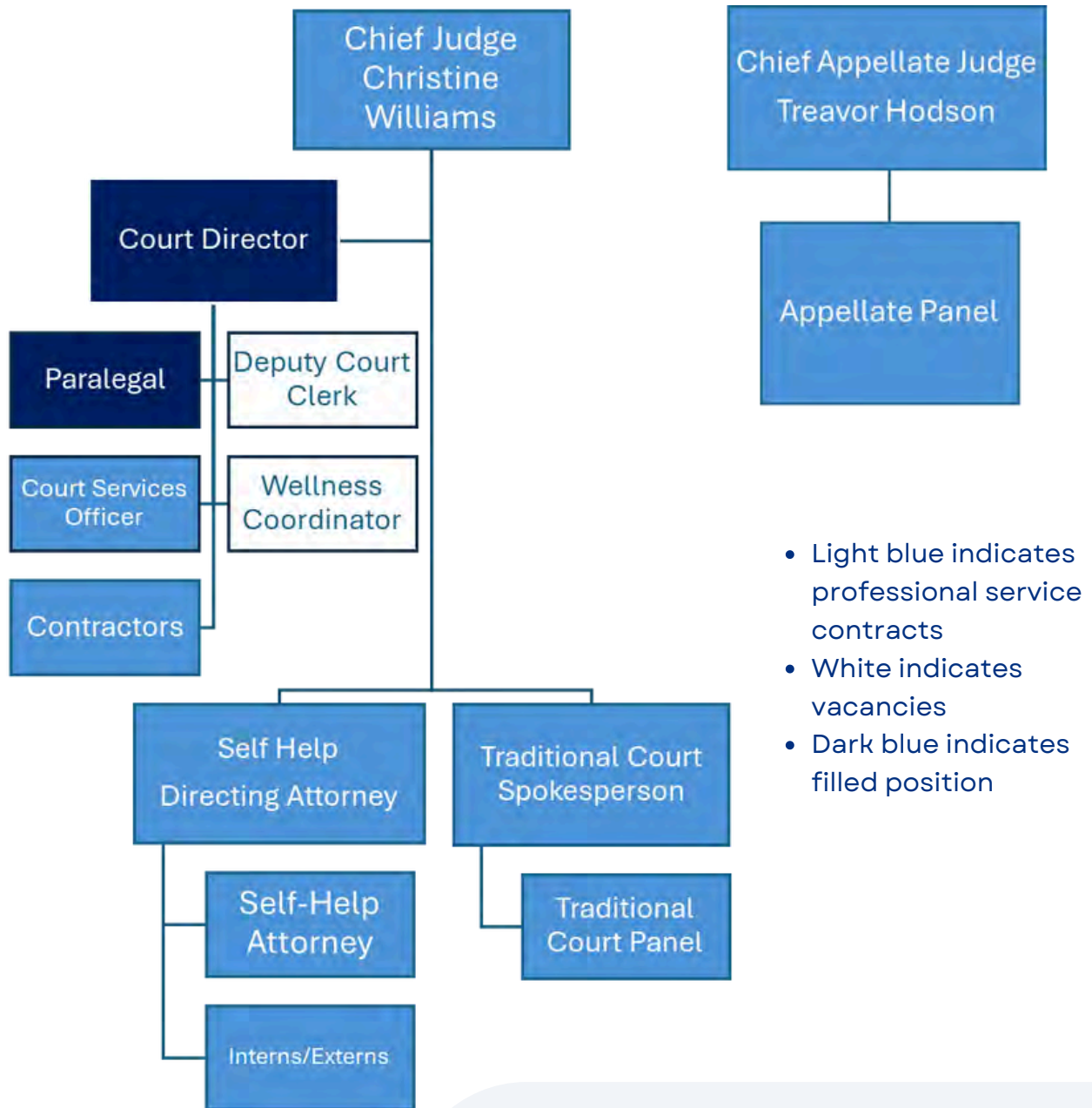
OUR VISION

A culturally and economically thriving community of self-governing, resilient people united by shared values and traditions, reflective of our ancestors' dreams.



OUR TEAM

Wilton Rancheria Courts



A YEAR IN REVIEW

Wilton Rancheria Judicial Branch include Tribal Court, Traditional Court, Appellate Panel, and Self-help Legal Center. 2023 was marked by significant progress and development across various initiatives aimed at enhancing access to legal services and creating infrastructure for the court. Below are the highlights of our achievements in 2023.

Proposed Family Protection Codes

Amy Ann Taylor introduced new family protection codes designed to safeguard the rights and well-being of families within our community. These codes focused on providing comprehensive support and resources to ensure the safety and stability of family units. While not all the codes were adopted by Tribal Council the groundwork is laid for Council to refine, edit, and adopt.

Grant Funding

We were pleased to announce that we secured grant funding from the National Congress of American Indians (NCAI). In addition to the NCAI funding, we also received grant funding from the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA). In the fourth quarter, the court hosted a site visit with BIA.

A YEAR IN REVIEW

New Offices on Laguna Springs Dr

We moved our physical presence to new offices on Laguna Springs Drive. This new location will serve as a hub for the Self-Help Center and Tribal Court, providing easier access to resources and confidential support for our members.

Wilton Rancheria Online

In an effort to increase transparency and accessibility, the Wilton Rancheria Constitution and Codes were made available online. This initiative ensures that all tribal members and Wilton Rancheria Bar members can easily access important legal documents and stay informed about rights and responsibilities.

Data and Legal Clinics

Our data and legal clinics have been instrumental in providing specialized support to community members. These clinics focus on expungement, family law, and estate planning, offering expert advice and assistance to those in need. Legal clinic recordings are posted online for citizens to use. The court also added the most used court forms online.

TRIBAL COURT

Wilton Rancheria Bar Association: Tribal Court swore in twelve new attorneys to our Bar Association for a total of 18 Bar members.

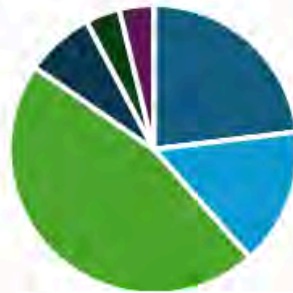
Case Filings: Tribal Court received 12 new case filings in 2023 and resolved 12 pending cases. These filings include citations written under the Peace and Safety Act, Appeals of Tribal Government Decisions, and adult and juvenile cases under the tribe's Guardianship Act.

2023-2025 Strategic Plan:

The Tribal Court is excited to share that the Judicial Branch has officially adopted the 2023-2025 Strategic Plan. To develop this document, the Court first held two Town Hall listening sessions, which included a survey, for all members of the General Council. Using the information gathered from the sessions and survey responses, the Court Strategic Planning Team then conducted a two-day Strategic Planning Meeting to develop the Judicial Branch's mission statement, goals, and action plans.

SELF-HELP CENTER

2023 Self Help Center Matters



- Family Law
- Real Property
- Abuse/Protection
- Personal Injury
- Child Welfare
- Expungements
- Employment
- Other
- Housing
- Trusts and Estates / Probate
- Business and Contracts
- Tribal Court Matters

The Wilton Rancheria Courts' Self-Help Center provides the following services for Wilton Rancheria Tribal members:

Free legal information and guidance to Tribal members from our Self-Help Attorney, AmyAnn Taylor. Ms. Taylor is experienced in tribal, state, and federal law. She can help Tribal members determine the most effective and appropriate approach to address their legal issues. She will also be available to review forms to ensure they are ready to file with the appropriate court.

Free use of the Self-Help Center computer system for legal research and form preparation. Those looking to print out their own court forms and/or fill them out online can use our self-help computer/printer, available in our Self-Help Corner.

Free forms, instructions, and referrals. The Center can provide forms and instructions, explain legal processes, and refer individuals to other organizations or attorneys.

Free legal clinics providing education on topics of law that members can benefit from.

We have established a Self-Help Center to provide community members with the resources and support they need to navigate legal and personal challenges. The center offers guidance on a range of issues, including family law, estate planning, and more.

The Self-Help Center assisted tribal members with 387 matters between May and December 2023. These matters vary in topic and primarily are addressed in State Courts. Sixty-six percent of the matters were related to Family Law or Trusts and Estates/Probate. These may be areas to consider for future code to handle the cases through the tribal court.

Legal Clinics

April 22, 2023 Legal Clinic and Open House

November 4, 2023 Legal Clinic with 25 in attendance

CLOSING

2023 was a year of growth and progress, with numerous initiatives aimed at improving the access to legal services for tribal members. We look forward to continuing this momentum and achieving even greater success in the coming year.

Thank you for your continued support.



ATTACHMENTS

WILTON RANCHERIA COURTS



First Quarter Report – 2023 (January - March)

Prepared and presented by:

Hon. Christine Williams, Chief Judge
and
Samantha Cypret, Court Director



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2023-2025 Strategic Plan Goals

The Tribal Court is excited to share that the Judicial Branch has officially adopted the 2023-2025 Strategic Plan. The Plan has been shared with the General Council via our [website](#). To develop this document, the Court first held two Town Hall listening sessions, which included a survey, for all members of the General Council. Using the information gathered from the sessions and survey responses, the Court Strategic Planning Team then conducted a two-day Strategic Planning Meeting to develop the Judicial Branch’s mission statement, goals, and action plans. The final step was to draft this Strategic Plan to identify the Judicial Branch’s future goals, the strategies necessary to accomplish those goals, and the internal performance management system used to monitor and evaluate progress.

GOALS, OUTCOMES AND ACTIVITIES

Tribal Court Logic Model

Goal/Objective	Outcomes	2023 Q1 Activities
<p><u>Culturally Informed</u> Court reflects and responds to the Community</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased focus on Traditional Court resolution • Youth involved in court programs/planning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide Administrative assistance to Traditional Court • Open house event at the Court Office scheduled for 4/22
<p><u>Access to Justice</u> Court is fair and accessible to the community</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased awareness of Court process • More cases filed by community • Expanded self-help services • Court process is followed consistently 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wilton Rancheria Constitution and Codes are published online • Summer 2023 Extern has been hired • Bailiff/Process Server position is posted online <p><u>Self-help:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Paralegal/Legal Secretary position posted online • Website updated with additional information
<p><u>Tribal Sovereignty</u> Court is Exercising Full Jurisdiction</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Additional Tribal Court case types • Increased partnership with stakeholders • More cases filed by the Tribe • Collaboration with Tribal departments 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Met with Office of the Chair and Vice Chair and Dorothy Alther from CILS to explore possibility of starting the process to develop Tribal Law Enforcement • Continue to work with Code Development Consultants to revise new proposed code sections to expand Tribal Court jurisdiction

Health and Wellness

Court maintains Safe and Appropriate Facilities

- Improved Court security
- New Justice center is constructed on tribal lands
- Initiated hiring process for bailiff/process server
- Moved into new facility for increased security measures

Traditional Court Logic Model

Goal/Objective	Outcomes	Activities 2023-2025
<u>Culturally Informed</u> Court reflects and responds to the Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More cases heard in the Traditional Court • Youth involved in Court Programs/Planning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monthly Traditional Court meetings on January 26th and February 27th • Reviewed and finalized Strategic Plan
<u>Access to Justice</u> Court is fair and accessible to the community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All Traditional Court Elders prepared to hear cases fairly and impartially • Parties feel process is transparent and fair 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Updated website to include headshots and bios • Added Strategic Plan to website
<u>Tribal Sovereignty</u> Court is Exercising Full Jurisdiction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provided support for legislation to increase case types • The Traditional Court is serving all possible parties 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reviewed and comment on new Code sections • Meet with Tribal Council to review proposed Codes
<u>Health and Wellness</u> Court maintains Safe and Appropriate Facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tribal culture is reflected in court facilities and functions • Respect for the Court is balanced with friendliness 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Moved into new office for increased accessibility and safety • Purchased name tags for Tribal Elders • Purchased Tribal Flag for the Court

Appellate Panel Logic Model

Goal/Objective	Outcomes	Activities 2023-2025
<p><u>Culturally Informed</u></p> <p>Court reflects and responds to the Community</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Traditional Court is utilized in Appellate Court • Appellate Judges participate in Court community events • Appellate Judges' demeanor reflects Tribe's values 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hold bi-monthly meetings on January 10th and March 7th • Chief Judge Williams, Appellate Chief Judge Hodson, and Director Cypret met on February 7th • Reviewed and finalized Strategic Plan
<p><u>Access to Justice</u></p> <p>Court is fair and accessible to the community</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Court Precedent is recorded and followed • Court is Independent from other government branches 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Updated website to include bios and more Appellate Panel information • Added Codes and Constitutions to the public website
<p><u>Tribal Sovereignty</u></p> <p>Court is exercising Full Jurisdiction</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developed capacity to hear time sensitive case types • Judges are qualified to hear every case brought on appeal • Advocates/Attorneys are qualified to appear in Tribal Court 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All Appellate Judges have agreed to serve as pro tem judges • Hon. Terrie Robinson has been appointed by the Tribal Council to fill vacancy
<p><u>Health and Wellness</u></p> <p>Court maintains safe and appropriate facilities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hearings are welcoming and follow all procedures • Court Mission is reflected in the Court facilities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appellate Panel has participated in drafting process for all new code sections • Moved in to a safer, more accessible office in January

Self-Help Center Report

The Wilton Rancheria Courts' Self-Help Center provides the following services for Wilton Rancheria Tribal members:

- Free legal information and guidance to Tribal members from our Self-Help Attorney, AmyAnn Taylor. Ms. Taylor is experienced in tribal, state, and federal law. She can help Tribal members determine the most effective and appropriate approach to address their legal

issues. She will also be available to review forms to ensure they are ready to file with the appropriate court;

- Free use of the Self-Help Center computer system for legal research and form preparation. Those looking to print out their own court forms and/or fill them out online can use our self-help computer/printer, available in our Self-Help Corner. The Center also provides free Tribal Court forms, instructions, and directions. The Center can provide state and federal court forms and instructions, explain legal processes, and refer individuals to other organizations or attorneys; and
- Finally, the Center puts on free legal clinics throughout the year to provide education on topics of law that may affect all tribal members. We determine the topics for future clinics based on the types of legal matters coming before the Self-Help Attorney.

Individual Assistance

The great majority of the Self-Help Attorney’s time is spent assisting individual members with specific legal matters. The table below represents a monthly breakdown of the number of members assisted and the types of legal matters addressed.

January	Members Assisted: 15
<u>Legal Matter Types</u>	<u>% of Time Allocation Per Month/Matter Type</u>
Expungement (x5)	33%
Probate (x3)	20%
Child Support (x2)	13%
Divorce (x2)	13%
Temporary Guardianship	6%
Appeal of a Government Decision	6%
Contract Dispute	6%
February	Members Assisted: 19
<u>Legal Matter Types</u>	<u>% of Time Allocation Per Month/Matter Type</u>
Expungement (x4)	21%
Divorce (x3)	16%
Child Custody (x2)	11%
Probate (x2)	11%
Spousal Support (x2)	11%
Contract Dispute	5%
Landlord/Tenant Dispute	5%
Workplace Violence Restraining Order	5%
SBA 8(a)	5%
Marriage License	5%
March	Members Assisted: 25
<u>Legal Matter Types</u>	<u>% of Time Allocation Per Month/Matter Type</u>
Divorce (x7)	28%
Restraining Order (x4)	16%

Estate Planning (x4)	16%
Probate (x3)	12%
IRS – Taxation Matter	4%
Child Custody	4%
Contract Review	4%
Landlord/Tenant Dispute	4%
Habeus Corpus Issue	4%
Health Care Admittance	4%
Cease and Desist Letter	4%
TOTAL MEMBERS ASSISTED IN Q1	59

Case Data

The Tribal Court has the jurisdiction to hear all cases and controversies under the jurisdiction of the Tribe that arise in tribal law, this includes: The Constitution of the Wilton Rancheria; The written laws of the Tribe; Customs and traditions of the Wilton Rancheria. The types of cases the Court is currently authorized to hear by written law of the Tribe are:

- Constitutional Questions – can be filed by either Legislative or Executive branch or jointly.
- Review of government decision – appeals of decisions made by a tribal entity filed by a tribal member.
- Government violation action (Peace and Security Act) – petitions or citations filed by the Tribe for violations of tribal law.
- Civil claims – petitions related to recovery of money or other damages if supported in tribal law.
- Violations of the Conduct and Ethics Act by Government Officials – private actions against government officials for misconduct.
- Appeals – asking the Tribal Court Appellate Panel to review a decision from the Tribal Court.

The Court handled the following cases during Q1:

Types of Cases	2023 Ongoing Cases	Q1 2023 New Cases
Constitutional Questions	0	0
Civil Claims	4	1
Peace and Security Act	1	0
Juvenile*	2	1
Wedding**	0	0
Total	7	2

* The Court hears the juvenile cases under the general jurisdiction of the Tribal Court. There is no written tribal law in place to handle juvenile or family law matters.

** Weddings must receive authority under a Tribal Council Resolution.

Quarterly Report Questions from Tribal Council

1. *What are some things you have learned or challenges you have faced while trying to meet your goals?*

The largest barriers the Court faces to exercising full jurisdiction are a lack of enforceable tribal laws, a limited Indian Child Welfare Department, a lack of tribal law enforcement and no tribal Attorney General/ prosecuting attorney.

On a smaller scale, our current challenges are understaffing and information sharing. First, our Self-Help Center is currently being staffed by one, part-time contractor and one legal extern. While they combine to serve an extraordinary number of Tribal Members every month, we do hear that Members are unhappy with the wait time or turnaround time for their respective matters. We have initiated the hiring process for a Paralegal/Legal Secretary. That position would spend the great majority of their time (approximately 80%) assisting Tribal Members in the Self-Help Center. The remainder of time would be used to assist the Court in form/guide and overall development.

The second challenge is information sharing. We hear from Tribal Members that there is some confusion on what the Court does and what services the Court and Self-Help Center provides. In response, we scheduled our next Legal Clinic to address these questions. We plan to have Chief Judge Williams give an overview of the Court. AmyAnn Taylor will then present on the Self-Help Center and share how to start a case in the Tribal Court. We will close with presentations from the Appellate Panel and Traditional Court to cover their respective roles within the Judicial Branch. The Clinic will also be recorded via Zoom and shared on the Court's website. Following the Clinic, we will invite all in-person attendees to come to the new Court office for an Open House. We hope to highlight the new space and the increased privacy and confidentiality it provides.

2. *What services, please show quantifiable data (quarter by quarter), has your office provided to the General Council?*

While much of the Court activity is confidential, please see the [Self-Help Center report](#) for quantifiable data.

3. *Do you need any clarification of your law(s) or have any suggestions on how we can make it/them better?*

The Court is currently working with two Court Development Consultants to develop three new sets of Codes (Family Protection Code, Good Standing Code, and Domestic Violence Code) for presentation during Q2. We would also like to see the drafting of new code sections to address the need for Tribal Law Enforcement. While the Court cannot draft new legislation, we look forward to working with the other branches to move forward on this important goal.

4. *What policies or manuals are available to the General Council?*

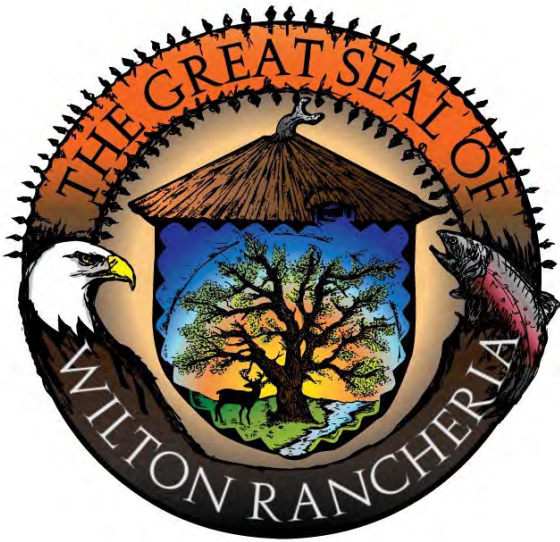
We are excited that all of the [Wilton Rancheria Codes and Constitution](#) are now available online. We have also added the [Self-Help Acknowledgment Form](#) to the Wilton website. The completion of this form is a pre-requisite for self-help services. All Court forms are currently available on the Member's Only SharePoint but we are working to transition these forms to the public website.

5. *What policies or manuals are available to the general public?*
All Codes and information mentioned above are now included on the public website. We currently have all of the [Self-Help materials and legal clinics available](#) on the Tribe's website. We plan to make all Court forms available on the public website once they are available.
6. *What policies or manuals are you working on?*
We are currently working on the Court Clerk manual and the policies surrounding the transition for the grievance and ethics complaints to the Court. We are working to update all of our official Court forms following feedback from the Self-Help Center and Court parties.
7. *Is there any other information/feedback you would like to provide to the Tribal Council?*
The Court would like to thank the Tribal Council for their continued support of the Court. We look forward to working with the Tribal Council to continue to address the issues identified above as the current barriers to justice present for the Court.

Financial Report

This is the [financial report](#) provided to the Courts by the Wilton Rancheria Department of Finance.

WILTON RANCHERIA COURTS



Second Quarter Report – 2023 (April - June)

Prepared and presented by:

Hon. Christine Williams, Chief Judge
and
Samantha Cypret, Court Director



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2023-2025 Strategic Plan Goals

The Judicial Branch has officially adopted the 2023-2025 Strategic Plan. The Plan has been shared with the General Council via our [website](#). To develop this document, the Court first held two Town Hall listening sessions, which included a survey, for all members of the General Council. Using the information gathered from the sessions and survey responses, the Court Strategic Planning Team then conducted a two-day Strategic Planning Meeting to develop the Judicial Branch’s mission statement, goals, and action plans. The final step was to draft this Strategic Plan to identify the Judicial Branch’s future goals, the strategies necessary to accomplish those goals, and the internal performance management system used to monitor and evaluate progress.

GOALS, OUTCOMES AND ACTIVITIES

Tribal Court Logic Model

Goal/Objective	Outcomes	2023 Q2 Activities
<p><u>Culturally Informed</u> Court reflects and responds to the Community</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased focus on Traditional Court resolution • Youth involved in court programs/planning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tribal Court Legal Clinic and Open House held on April 22nd. • Participated in the Annual Meeting. • Spokesperson Tarango participated in the Wilton graduation event.
<p><u>Access to Justice</u> Court is fair and accessible to the community</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased awareness of Court process • More cases filed by community • Expanded self-help services • Court process is followed consistently 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jes Dickson brought on as summer extern. • Fall 2023 Extern has been hired. • Added video from Legal Clinic to website. <p><u>Self-help:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Legal Secretary hired. Kristina Ramos joined the team in May. • Most used Court forms are now available online in three different formats.
<p><u>Tribal Sovereignty</u> Court is Exercising Full Jurisdiction</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Additional Tribal Court case types • Increased partnership with stakeholders • More cases filed by the Tribe • Collaboration with Tribal departments 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Applied for additional grant funding to expand Peace and Security Act and ICW Department to Social Services Department. • Continue to work with Code Development Consultants to revise new proposed code sections to expand Tribal Court jurisdiction

Health and Wellness

Court maintains Safe and Appropriate Facilities

- Improved Court security
- New Justice center is constructed on tribal lands
- Obtained additional grant funding to improve Court Security (metal detectors, Ring cameras, etc.).

Traditional Court Logic Model

Goal/Objective	Outcomes	2023 Q2 Activities
<u>Culturally Informed</u> Court reflects and responds to the Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More cases heard in the Traditional Court • Youth involved in Court Programs/Planning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monthly Traditional Court meetings on April 24th, May 22nd, and June 26th. • Participated in Legal Clinic and Open House and Annual Meeting
<u>Access to Justice</u> Court is fair and accessible to the community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All Traditional Court Elders prepared to hear cases fairly and impartially • Parties feel process is transparent and fair 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Added Annual reports to website. • Added video from Legal Clinic to website.
<u>Tribal Sovereignty</u> Court is Exercising Full Jurisdiction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provided support for legislation to increase case types • The Traditional Court is serving all possible parties 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reviewed and comment on new Code sections • Met with Tribal Council to review proposed Codes
<u>Health and Wellness</u> Court maintains Safe and Appropriate Facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tribal culture is reflected in court facilities and functions • Respect for the Court is balanced with friendliness 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continued to outfit new office for increased safety and accessibility.

Appellate Panel Logic Model

Goal/Objective	Outcomes	2023 Q2 Activities
<p><u>Culturally Informed</u></p> <p>Court reflects and responds to the Community</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Traditional Court is utilized in Appellate Court Appellate Judges participate in Court community events Appellate Judges' demeanor reflects Tribe's values 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Held bi-monthly meeting on May 15th Participated in Legal Clinic and Open House Appellate Chief Judge participated in Wilton graduation event Appellate Chief Judge participated in Annual Meeting
<p><u>Access to Justice</u></p> <p>Court is fair and accessible to the community</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Court Precedent is recorded and followed Court is Independent from other government branches 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Added most-used Court Forms to public website Appellate Chief Judge Hodson participated in Legal Secretary hiring process.
<p><u>Tribal Sovereignty</u></p> <p>Court is exercising Full Jurisdiction</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Developed capacity to hear time sensitive case types Judges are qualified to hear every case brought on appeal Advocates/Attorneys are qualified to appear in Tribal Court 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All Appellate Judges have agreed to serve as pro tem judges Hon. Terrie Robinson sworn in to serve on the Appellate Panel
<p><u>Health and Wellness</u></p> <p>Court maintains safe and appropriate facilities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hearings are welcoming and follow all procedures Court Mission is reflected in the Court facilities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Appellate Panel has participated in drafting process for all new code sections

Self-Help Center Report

The Wilton Rancheria Courts' Self-Help Center provides the following services for Wilton Rancheria Tribal members:

- Free legal information and guidance to Tribal members from our Self-Help Attorney, AmyAnn Taylor. Ms. Taylor is experienced in tribal, state, and federal law. She can help Tribal members determine the most effective and appropriate approach to address their legal

issues. She will also be available to review forms to ensure they are ready to file with the appropriate court;

- Free use of the Self-Help Center computer system for legal research and form preparation. Those looking to print out their own court forms and/or fill them out online can use our self-help computer/printer, available in our Self-Help Corner. The Center also provides free Tribal Court forms, instructions, and directions. The Center can provide state and federal court forms and instructions, explain legal processes, and refer individuals to other organizations or attorneys; and
- Finally, the Center puts on free legal clinics throughout the year to provide education on topics of law that may affect all tribal members. We determine the topics for future clinics based on the types of legal matters coming before the Self-Help Attorney.

Individual Assistance

The great majority of the Self-Help Attorney’s time is spent assisting individual members with specific legal matters. The table below represents a monthly breakdown of the number of members assisted and the types of legal matters addressed.

April	Members Assisted: 23
<u>Legal Matter Types</u>	<u>% of Time Allocation Per Month/Matter Type</u>
Trusts & Estates (x10)	43%
Abuse/Protection (x9)	39%
Family Law (x4)	17%
Other (x1)	4%
May	Members Assisted: 26
<u>Legal Matter Types</u>	<u>% of Time Allocation Per Month/Matter Type</u>
Trust & Estates (x12)	47%
Family Law (x6)	23%
Property Law (x4)	15%
Abuse/Protection (x2)	6%
Business Contracts (x1)	4%
Other (x1)	4%
June	Members Assisted: 48
<u>Legal Matter Types</u>	<u>% of Time Allocation Per Month/Matter Type</u>
Trust & Estates (x20)	42%
Family Law (x15)	31%
Property Law (x4)	8%
Abuse/Protection (x3)	6%
Business Contracts (x2)	4%
Expungement (x1)	2%
Other (x3)	2%
TOTAL MEMBERS ASSISTED IN Q2	97

Case Data

The Tribal Court has the jurisdiction to hear all cases and controversies under the jurisdiction of the Tribe that arise in tribal law, this includes: The Constitution of the Wilton Rancheria; The written laws of the Tribe; Customs and traditions of the Wilton Rancheria. The types of cases the Court is currently authorized to hear by written law of the Tribe are:

- Constitutional Questions – can be filed by either Legislative or Executive branch or jointly.
- Review of government decision – appeals of decisions made by a tribal entity filed by a tribal member.
- Government violation action (Peace and Security Act) – petitions or citations filed by the Tribe for violations of tribal law.
- Civil claims – petitions related to recovery of money or other damages if supported in tribal law.
- Violations of the Conduct and Ethics Act by Government Officials – private actions against government officials for misconduct.
- Appeals – asking the Tribal Court Appellate Panel to review a decision from the Tribal Court.

The Court handled the following cases during Q1:

Types of Cases	2023 Ongoing Cases	Q2 2023 New Cases
Constitutional Questions	0	0
Civil Claims	2	1
Peace and Security Act	1	1
Juvenile*	2	1
Wedding**	0	1
Total	5	4

* The Court hears the juvenile cases under the general jurisdiction of the Tribal Court. There is no written tribal law in place to handle juvenile or family law matters.

** Weddings must receive authority under a Tribal Council Resolution.

Quarterly Report Questions from Tribal Council

1. *What are some things you have learned or challenges you have faced while trying to meet your goals?*

The largest barriers the Court faces to exercising full jurisdiction are a lack of enforceable tribal laws, a limited Indian Child Welfare Department, a lack of tribal law enforcement and no tribal Attorney General/ prosecuting attorney. We are working to obtain additional grant funds to contract with Code Development Consultants to update and expand the current codes to address the expanding needs of the Wilton community.

On a smaller scale, our current challenges are understaffing and information sharing. First, we have brought on a Legal Secretary/Paralegal, Kristina Ramos. She will spend the great majority of her time (approximately 80%) assisting Tribal Members in the Self-Help Center. The remainder of time would be used to assist the Court in form/guide revisions and overall Court matters.

- The second challenge is information sharing. We heard from Tribal Members that there is some confusion on what the Court does and what services the Court and Self-Help Center provides. In response, we held a Legal Clinic to address these questions. Chief Judge Williams gave an overview of the Court. AmyAnn Taylor then presented on the Self-Help Center and shared how to start a case in the Tribal Court. We closed with presentations from the Appellate Panel and Traditional Court to discuss their respective roles within the Judicial Branch. The Clinic was recorded via Zoom and shared on the Court's website. Following the Clinic, we invited all in-person attendees to come to the new Court office for an Open House. We highlighted the new space and the increased privacy and confidentiality it provides.
2. *What services, please show quantifiable data (quarter by quarter), has your office provided to the General Council?*
While much of the Court activity is confidential, please see the [Self-Help Center report](#) for quantifiable data.
 3. *Do you need any clarification of your law(s) or have any suggestions on how we can make it/them better?*
The Court is currently working with two Court Development Consultants to develop three new sets of Codes (Family Protection Code, Good Standing Code, and Domestic Violence Code). These draft codes were presented to Tribal Council for initiation of the rule making process. Following Tribal Council direction, we have applied for additional grant funding that will allow us to contract with Code Development Consultants to revise and expand the Peace and Security Act and the ICW Department.
 4. *What policies or manuals are available to the General Council?*
We are excited that all of our most-utilized forms are now available on the [Court's website](#) in three different formats. We will continue to work to get the remainder of our forms available online as soon as possible.
 5. *What policies or manuals are available to the general public?*
All Codes and information mentioned above are now included on the public website. We currently have all of the [Self-Help materials and legal clinics available](#) on the Tribe's website. This includes the videos from the most recent legal clinic, which covered presentations from the Appellate Panel, Traditional Court, and the Self-Help Center
 6. *What policies or manuals are you working on?*
We are currently working on the Court Clerk manual and the policies surrounding the transition for the grievance and ethics complaints to the Court. We have updated our official Court forms following feedback from the Self-Help Center and Court parties. These are now available on the website.
 7. *Is there any other information/feedback you would like to provide to the Tribal Council?*
The Court would like to thank the Tribal Council for their continued support of the Court. We look forward to working with the Tribal Council to continue to address the issues identified above as the current barriers to justice present for the Court.

Financial Report

This is the [financial report](#) provided to the Courts by the Wilton Rancheria Department of Finance.

WILTON RANCHERIA COURTS JUDICIAL BRANCH



Prepared and presented by:

Hon. Christine Williams, Chief Judge

Third Quarter
Report – 2023
(July - September)

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Strategic Plan Goals, Outcomes & Activities

The Judicial Branch has officially adopted the 2023-2025 Strategic Plan. The Plan is available via our website. A summary of the Goals and Outcomes as they relate to the Strategic Plan and the Activities from the third quarter of 2023 is listed below in the logic model format found in the Strategic Plan.

Tribal Court Logic Model

Goal/Objective	Outcomes	2023 Q3 Activities
<p><u>Culturally Informed</u></p> <p>Court reflects and responds to the Community</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased focus on Traditional Court resolution • Youth involved in court programs/planning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Court issued marriage license and performed marriage ceremony for a Tribal Member wedding on August 31, 2023. • Chief Judge attended California Native American Day and Tribal Leaders Forum at the State Capitol on September 22, 2023.
<p><u>Access to Justice</u></p> <p>Court is fair and accessible to the Community</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased awareness of Court process • More cases filed by community • Expanded self-help services • Court process is followed consistently 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tribal Court planned and hosted High Conflict Training on August 28, 2023; all employees and leadership were invited. • Attended BIA Funding Meeting for Central Region on August 31, 2023. • Continued recruitment efforts for Court Director. <p><u>Self-help:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expungement Clinic held July 22, 2023. • Family Law Clinic held September 9, 2023.
<p><u>Tribal Sovereignty</u></p> <p>Court is Exercising Full Jurisdiction</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Additional Tribal Court case types • Increased partnership with stakeholders • More cases filed by the Tribe • Collaboration with Tribal departments 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tribal Court met with Sacramento County District Attorney and Wilton Executive Team to discuss future partnerships. • Chief Judge attended the U.S. Judicial Council of the Ninth Circuit, Ad Hoc Committee on Tribal and Native Relations (first ever) Meet and Greet with U.S. Supreme Court Justice Elena Kagan and Tribal Leaders from the Northwest on August 2, 2023, in Portland Oregon. • Chief Judge attended virtual Violence Against Women Education Project Meeting on September 15, 2023. • Presented final versions of 3 drafts of laws on September 19, 2023; Good Standing Act; Family Protection Act; Guardianship Act

Health and Wellness

Court maintains Safe and Appropriate Facilities

- Improved Court security
- New Justice center is constructed on tribal lands

Cameras have been installed at the exterior doors of the Court Office.

Traditional Court Logic Model

Goal/Objective	Outcomes	2023 Q3 Activities
<u>Culturally Informed</u> Court reflects and responds to the Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More cases heard in the Traditional Court • Youth involved in Court Programs/Planning 	Monthly Traditional Court meetings on July 24, 2023, and September 24, 2023.
<u>Access to Justice</u> Court is fair and accessible to the Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All Traditional Court Elders prepared to hear cases fairly and impartially • Parties feel process is transparent and fair 	Traditional Court participated in High Conflict Training on August 28, 2023.
<u>Tribal Sovereignty</u> Court is Exercising Full Jurisdiction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provided support for legislation to increase case types • The Traditional Court is serving all possible parties 	Discussed process for review and submission of draft laws.
<u>Health and Wellness</u> Court maintains Safe and Appropriate Facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tribal culture is reflected in court facilities and functions • Respect for the Court is balanced with friendliness 	Discussed and recommended to add a receptionist, entry level clerk to 2024 budget.

Appellate Panel Logic Model

Goal/Objective	Outcomes	2023 Q3 Activities
<u>Culturally Informed</u> Court reflects and responds to the Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Traditional Court is utilized in Appellate Court • Appellate Judges participate in Court community events • Appellate Judges’ demeanor reflects Tribe’s values 	Held bi-monthly meeting on July 11, 2023.
<u>Access to Justice</u> Court is fair and accessible to the Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Court Precedent is recorded and followed • Court is Independent from other government branches 	Appellate Chief Judge began research and work on Judicial Appointment Process.

<u>Tribal Sovereignty</u> Court is exercising Full Jurisdiction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developed capacity to hear time sensitive case types • Judges are qualified to hear every case brought on appeal • Advocates/Attorneys are qualified to appear in Tribal Court 	Appellate Judges have assigned tasks to improve court function and will report at their meetings on progress.
<u>Health and Wellness</u> Court maintains safe and appropriate facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hearings are welcoming and follow all procedures • Court Mission is reflected in the Court facilities 	Appellate Judges participated in High Conflict Training on August 28, 2023.

Case Data

The Tribal Court has the jurisdiction to hear all cases and controversies under the jurisdiction of the Tribe that arise in tribal law. The Court handled the following cases during Q3 2023:

Types of Cases	Ongoing Cases	New Cases
Civil Claims	1	0
Peace and Security Act	0	2
Juvenile*	2	0
Wedding**	0	1
Total	3	3

* The Court hears the juvenile cases under the general jurisdiction of the Tribal Court. There is no written tribal law in place to handle juvenile or family law matters for the time period covered in this report.

** Weddings must receive authority under a Tribal Council Resolution.

Self-Help Center Report

The Wilton Rancheria Courts' Self-Help Center provides the following services for Wilton Rancheria Tribal members:

- Free individual legal assistance to Tribal members from our Self-Help Attorney.
- Free legal clinics to provide education on topics of law that may affect all tribal members.
- Free use of the Self-Help Center computer system for legal research and form preparation.

Individual Legal Assistance

The tables below represent a monthly breakdown of the number of members assisted each month and the types of legal matters addressed.

SELF-HELP CENTER MATTERS REPORTING MONTH: JULY 2023			
MATTER TYPE	NEW MATTERS	CONTINUING MATTERS	TOTAL
Family Law (Child Custody/Support, Divorce)	2	13	15
Child Welfare (Guardianship, TPR)	0	1	1
Housing (Evictions)	0	0	0
Real Property (Land use/Property)	0	3	3
Expungements	0	1	1
Trusts and Estates (POA, wills, trusts) / Probate	3	19	22
Abuse/Protection (Elder Abuse, DVRO, CHRO)	2	3	5
Employment	0	0	0
Business & Contracts	0	2	2
Personal Injury	1	0	1
Other (debt relief, fine, etc)	0	5	5
Tribal Court Matters	1	0	1
TOTAL MATTERS	9	47	56

SELF-HELP CENTER MATTERS REPORTING MONTH: AUGUST 2023			
MATTER TYPE	NEW MATTERS	CONTINUING MATTERS	TOTAL
Family Law (Child Custody/Support, Divorce)	5	9	14
Child Welfare (Guardianship, TPR)	1	1	2
Housing (Evictions)	0	0	0
Real Property (Land use/Property)	0	0	0
Expungements	0	0	0
Trusts and Estates (POA, wills, trusts) / Probate	0	18	18
Abuse/Protection (Elder Abuse, DVRO, CHRO)	1	1	2
Business & Contracts	1	1	2
Other (debt relief, fine, etc)	2	3	5
Tribal Court	2	0	2
TOTAL MATTERS	12	33	45

SELF-HELP CENTER MATTERS REPORTING MONTH: SEPTEMBER 2023			
MATTER TYPE	NEW MATTERS	CONTINUING MATTERS	TOTAL
Family Law (Child Custody/Support, Divorce)	2	12	14
Child Welfare (Guardianship, TPR)	0	1	1
Housing (Evictions)	0	0	0
Real Property (Land use/Property)	0	0	0
Expungements	0	0	0
Trusts and Estates (POA, wills, trusts) / Probate	2	16	18
Abuse/Protection (Elder Abuse, DVRO, CHRO)	2	0	2
Business & Contracts	0	2	2
Other (debt relief, employment, name change, etc)	3	1	4
Tribal Court	2	1	3
TOTAL MATTERS	11	33	44

Legal Clinics

The Court hosted two legal clinics in Q3 2023. The information for these clinics is below.

- The Expungement Clinic was held July 22, 2023. This clinic was to assist people with clearing their criminal records. 34 people signed up for the expungement clinic, but only 8 people attended.
- The Family Law Clinic was held September 9, 2023. This clinic provides information about divorce, child custody and child support processes. 18 people signed up, but only 5 people attended.

Quarterly Report Questions from Tribal Council

1. *What are some things you have learned or challenges you have faced while trying to meet your goals?*

The largest barriers the Court faces to exercising full jurisdiction are a lack of enforceable tribal laws, a limited Indian Child Welfare Department, a lack of tribal law enforcement and no tribal Attorney General/ prosecuting attorney. We are working to obtain additional grant funds to contract with Code Development Consultants to update and expand the current codes to address the expanding needs of the Wilton community.

On a smaller scale, our current challenges are understaffing. We are actively recruiting a Court Director since Samantha Cypret's transfer to the Executive Branch.
2. *What services, please show quantifiable data (quarter by quarter), has your office provided to the General Council?*

Please see the Self-Help Center and case reports above for quantifiable data.
3. *Do you need any clarification of your law(s) or have any suggestions on how we can make it/them better?*

While the Council has adopted new laws, it appears that they are not being kept current on the Tribe's website. The Court needs the Tribe to keep all laws up to date with Code Publishing Company so that parties, and the Court, can have the most current version of each law.
4. *What policies or manuals are available to the General Council?*

We are excited that all of our most-utilized forms are now available on the Court's website in three different formats. We will continue to work to get the remainder of our forms available online as soon as possible.
5. *What policies or manuals are available to the general public?*

All Codes and information mentioned above are now included on the public website. We currently have all of the Self-Help materials and legal clinics available on the Tribe's website. This includes the videos from the most recent legal clinic, which covered presentations from the Appellate Panel, Traditional Court, and the Self-Help Center
6. *What policies or manuals are you working on?*

We are currently working on the Court Clerk manual and the policies surrounding the transition for the grievance and ethics complaints to the Court. We have updated our official Court forms following feedback from the Self-Help Center and Court parties. These are now available on the website.
7. *Is there any other information/feedback you would like to provide to the Tribal Council?*

The Court would like to thank the Tribal Council for their continued support of the Court. We look forward to working with the Tribal Council to continue to address the issues identified above as the current barriers to justice present for the Court.

Financial Report

The financial report is provided to the Courts by the Wilton Rancheria Department of Finance and will be included in a separate document

WILTON RANCHERIA COURTS JUDICIAL BRANCH



Prepared and presented by:

Hon. Christine Williams, Chief Judge

**Fourth Quarter
Report – 2023**
(October - December)

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Strategic Plan Goals, Outcomes & Activities

The Judicial Branch has officially adopted the 2023-2025 Strategic Plan. The Plan is available via our website. A summary of the Goals and Outcomes as they relate to the Strategic Plan and the Activities from the fourth quarter of 2023 is listed below in the logic model format found in the Strategic Plan.

Tribal Court Logic Model

Goal/Objective	Outcomes	2023 Q4 Activities
<p><u>Culturally Informed</u></p> <p>Court reflects and responds to the Community</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased focus on Traditional Court resolution • Youth involved in court programs/planning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chief Judge attended and presented at the California Indian Law Association Conference
<p><u>Access to Justice</u></p> <p>Court is fair and accessible to the Community</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased awareness of Court process • More cases filed by community • Expanded self-help services • Court process is followed consistently 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Court hosted a site visit with the BIA Court Assessment Team from BIA Tribal Justice Support • Ongoing recruiting process for Director Position <p><u>Self-help:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will Clinic for Tribal Members
<p><u>Tribal Sovereignty</u></p> <p>Court is Exercising Full Jurisdiction</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Additional Tribal Court case types • Increased partnership with stakeholders • More cases filed by the Tribe • Collaboration with Tribal departments 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chief Judge attended virtual Violence Against Women Education Project Meeting • Presented Court Budget Proposal and reviewed with Council October 2023 • Chief Judge Participated in the Judicial Council Tribal Court State Court Forum Annual In-Person Meeting • Chief Judge Swore in a new Tribal Council Member
<p><u>Health and Wellness</u></p> <p>Court maintains Safe and Appropriate Facilities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved Court security • New Justice center is constructed on tribal lands 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Created job description for Bailiff

Traditional Court Logic Model

Goal/Objective	Outcomes	2023 Q4 Activities
<u>Culturally Informed</u> Court reflects and responds to the Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More cases heard in the Traditional Court • Youth involved in Court Programs/Planning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monthly Traditional Court meetings October 2023 AND November 2023.
<u>Access to Justice</u> Court is fair and accessible to the Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All Traditional Court Elders prepared to hear cases fairly and impartially • Parties feel process is transparent and fair 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Traditional Court participated in developing a Code of Conduct for the peacemakers.
<u>Tribal Sovereignty</u> Court is Exercising Full Jurisdiction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provided support for legislation to increase case types • The Traditional Court is serving all possible parties 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reviewed peacemaker contracts and reappointment process for pacemakers • Traditional Court Spokesperson participated in Director hiring
<u>Health and Wellness</u> Court maintains Safe and Appropriate Facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tribal culture is reflected in court facilities and functions • Respect for the Court is balanced with friendliness 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reviewed budget approved and new projects related to safety.

Appellate Panel Logic Model

Goal/Objective	Outcomes	2023 Q4 Activities
<u>Culturally Informed</u> Court reflects and responds to the Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Traditional Court is utilized in Appellate Court • Appellate Judges participate in Court community events • Appellate Judges' demeanor reflects Tribe's values 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Held bi-monthly meeting November 2023.
<u>Access to Justice</u> Court is fair and accessible to the Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Court Precedent is recorded and followed • Court is Independent from other government branches 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appellate Chief Judge discussed draft Judicial Appointment Process with other Appeals Judges and presented to Tribal Council. • Appellate Chief Judge participated in BIA Assessment process
<u>Tribal Sovereignty</u> Court is exercising Full Jurisdiction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developed capacity to hear time sensitive case types • Judges are qualified to hear every case brought on appeal • Advocates/Attorneys are 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appellate Judges have assigned tasks to improve court function and will report at their meetings on progress. • Associate Appellate Judge

	qualified to appear in Tribal Court	participated in Director hiring process.
<u>Health and Wellness</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hearings are welcoming and follow all procedures 	
Court maintains safe and appropriate facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Court Mission is reflected in the Court facilities 	

Case Data

The Tribal Court has the jurisdiction to hear all cases and controversies under the jurisdiction of the Tribe that arise in tribal law. The Court handled the following cases during Q4 2023:

Types of Cases	Ongoing Cases	New Cases
Civil Claims	1	2
Peace and Security Act	2	0
Juvenile*	1	1
Wedding**	0	0
Total	4	3

* The Court hears the juvenile cases under the general jurisdiction of the Tribal Court. There is no written tribal law in place to handle juvenile or family law matters for the time period covered in this report.

** Weddings must receive authority under a Tribal Council Resolution.

Self-Help Center Report

The Wilton Rancheria Courts' Self-Help Center provides the following services for Wilton Rancheria Tribal members:

- Free individual legal assistance to Tribal members from our Self-Help Attorney.
- Free legal clinics to provide education on topics of law that may affect all tribal members.
- Free use of the Self-Help Center computer system for legal research and form preparation.

Individual Legal Assistance

The tables below represent a monthly breakdown of the number of members assisted each month and the types of legal matters addressed.

SELF-HELP CENTER MATTERS			
REPORTING MONTH: OCTOBER 2023			
MATTER TYPE	NEW MATTERS	CONTINUING MATTERS	TOTAL MATTERS PER TYPE
Family Law (Child Custody/Support, Divorce)	3	13	16
Child Welfare (Guardianship, TPR)	2	1	3
Housing (Evictions)			
Expungements	1		1
Trusts and Estates (POA, wills, trusts) / Probate	2	18	20
Abuse/Protection (Elder Abuse, DVRO, CHRO)	2	1	3
Business & Contracts		2	2
Other (debt relief, employment, name change, etc)	4	4	8
Tribal Court		2	2
TOTAL MATTERS	14	41	55

SELF-HELP CENTER MATTERS			
REPORTING MONTH: NOVEMBER 2023			
MATTER TYPE	NEW MATTERS	CONTINUING MATTERS	TOTAL MATTERS PER TYPE
Family Law (Child Custody/Support, Divorce)	1	12	13
Child Welfare (Guardianship, TPR)		3	3
Housing (Evictions)			
Expungements		1	1
Trusts and Estates (POA, wills, trusts) / Probate	3	20	23
Abuse/Protection (Elder Abuse, DVRO, CHRO)		3	3
Business & Contracts	1		1
Other (debt relief, employment, name change, etc)	1	6	7
Tribal Court	1	2	3
TOTAL MATTERS	7	47	54

SELF-HELP CENTER MATTERS			
REPORTING MONTH: DECEMBER 2023			
MATTER TYPE	NEW MATTERS	CONTINUING MATTERS	TOTAL MATTERS PER TYPE
Family Law (Child Custody/Support, Divorce)	1	8	9
Child Welfare (Guardianship, TPR)		3	3
Housing (Evictions)			
Expungements			
Trusts and Estates (POA, wills, trusts) / Probate		19	19
Abuse/Protection (Elder Abuse, DVRO, CHRO)	1		1
Business & Contracts		1	1
Other (debt relief, employment, name change, etc)	1	4	5
Tribal Court		3	3
TOTAL MATTERS	3	38	41

Legal Clinics

The Self-Help Center provided a Will Clinic for Tribal Members on November 4, 2023. We had over 25 participants both in-person and on-line. Tribal Members that came in person were able to walk away with signed wills, power of attorney forms and advanced healthcare directives.

Quarterly Report Questions from Tribal Council

1. *What are some things you have learned or challenges you have faced while trying to meet your goals?*
The largest barriers the Court faces to exercising full jurisdiction are a lack of enforceable tribal laws, a limited Indian Child Welfare Department, a lack of tribal law enforcement and no tribal Attorney General/ prosecuting attorney. We are working to obtain additional grant funds to contract with Code Development Consultants to update and expand the current codes to address the expanding needs of the Wilton community.
On a smaller scale, our current challenges are understaffing. We are actively recruiting a Court Director since Samantha Cypret's transfer to the Executive Branch.
2. *What services, please show quantifiable data (quarter by quarter), has your office provided to the General Council?*
Please see the Self-Help Center and case reports above for quantifiable data.
3. *Do you need any clarification of your law(s) or have any suggestions on how we can make it/them better?*
Are all the laws online up to date?
4. *What policies or manuals are available to the General Council?*
We are excited that all of our most-utilized forms are now available on the Court's website in three different formats. We will continue to work to get the remainder of our forms available online as soon as possible.
5. *What policies or manuals are available to the general public?*
All Codes and information mentioned above are now included on the public website. We currently have all of the Self-Help materials and legal clinics available on the Tribe's website. This includes the videos from the most recent legal clinic, which covered presentations from the Appellate Panel, Traditional Court, and the Self-Help Center
6. *What policies or manuals are you working on?*
We are currently working on the Court Clerk manual and the policies surrounding the transition for the grievance and ethics complaints to the Court. We have updated our official Court forms following feedback from the Self-Help Center and Court parties. These are now available on the website.
7. *Is there any other information/feedback you would like to provide to the Tribal Council?*
The Court would like to thank the Tribal Council for their continued support of the Court. We look forward to working with the Tribal Council to continue to address the issues identified above as the current barriers to justice present for the Court.

Financial Report

The financial report is provided to the Courts by the Wilton Rancheria Department of Finance and will be included in a separate document



Wilton Rancheria Tribal Court

**WILTON RANCHERIA JUDICIAL BRANCH
STRATEGIC PLAN
2023 - 2025**

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INTRODUCTION

Wilton Rancheria Judicial Branch Strategic Plan was developed in coordination with the Traditional Court Elders, the Appellate Court Panel of Judges, the Chief Judge, the Court Director and the self-help attorney to provide guidance for the future development of programs and services offered by the Tribal Court.

Court Strategic Planning Team

The Judicial Branch is made up of a team of people lead by the Chief Judge as follows. These same people served as the Court Strategic Planning Team:

Tribal Court Chief Judge

Hon. Christine Williams (Yurok Tribe), Term: 2020-2024

Wilton Rancheria Traditional Court

Spokesperson Mary Tarango, Frank Custino, Joyce Dozier, Jeannie McKean, Mary Rangel Current Term: 2022-2024

Wilton Rancheria Appellate Panel

Chief Judge Treavor Hodson (Wilton Rancheria), Hon. Nicholas Mazanec, Hon. Victorio Shaw (Hoopa Valley Tribe), and Hon. Joseph Wiseman. We currently have one Appellate Panel vacancy. Current Term: 2020-2024

Staff

Samantha Cypret, Court Director (Mountain Maidu of Taylorsville Rancheria)
AmyAnn Taylor, Self Help Attorney

Strategic Planning Process

Strategic planning is an organization's process of defining its strategy, or direction, and making decisions on allocating its resources to pursue this strategy. This process is used by organizations to identify their goals, the strategies necessary to accomplish those goals and the internal performance management system used to monitor and evaluate progress.

The Department of Administration Establishment and Organization Act requires the Executive Director of the Department of Administration to create a comprehensive strategic plan, including the Tribe's vision statement and mission statement and goals for each department. Tribal Court is separate from the Administrative Branch and needs a complementary plan to build on the Journey and Vision Statements from the Tribe's Strategic Plan.

To develop our plan, the Court held two Town Hall listening sessions, which included a survey, for all

members of the General Council. We posted this PowerPoint on the intranet. We mailed the survey questions to each member as well in an attempt to collect as much information as possible. We received input from 52 of members through the town hall and survey process.

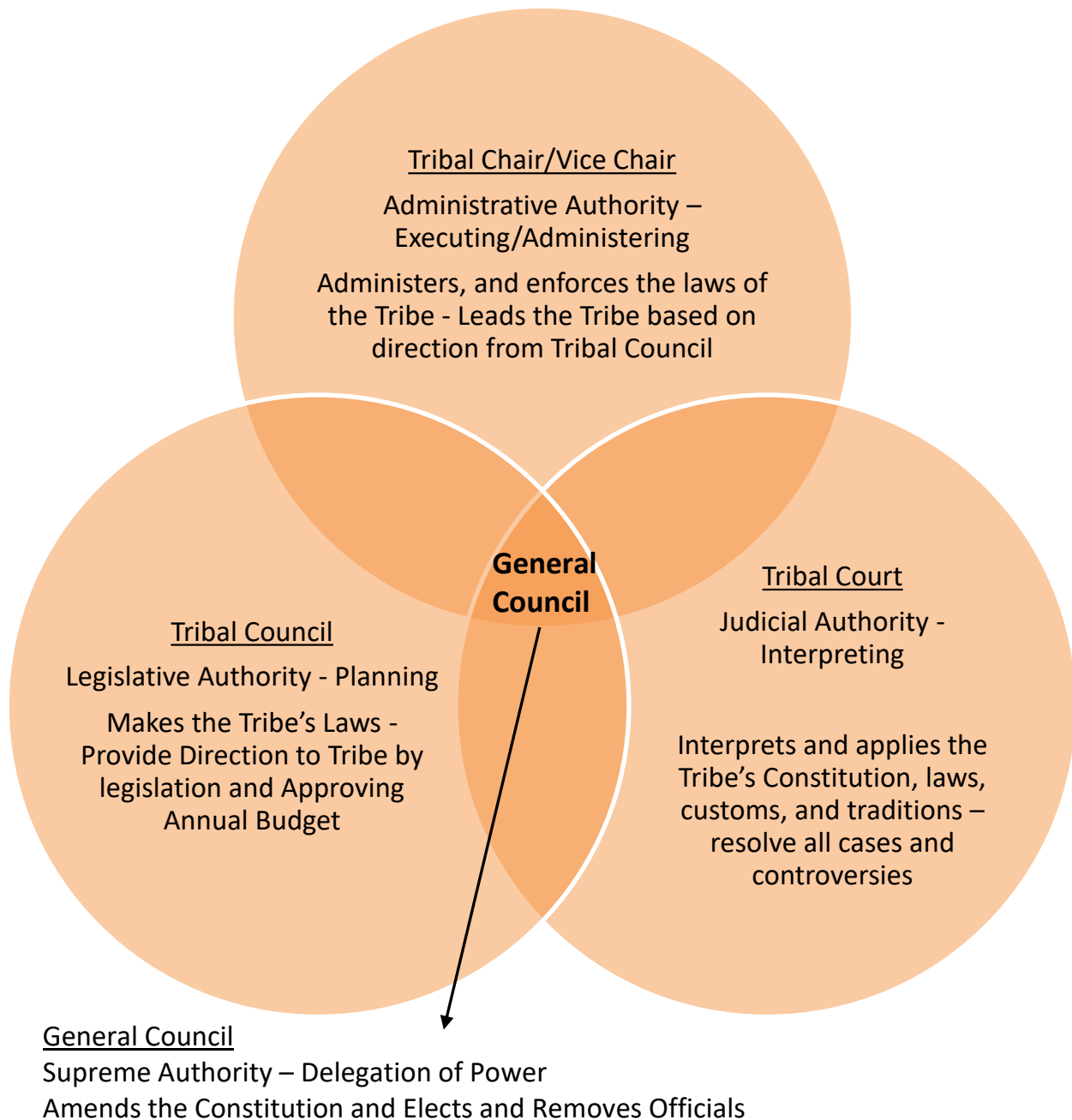
Finally, our Court Strategic Planning Team conducted a two-day Strategic Planning Meeting to develop the Judicial Branch's mission statement, goals and action plans. The Traditional Court, and staff were the core team members present for the entire two days. They reviewed the general membership survey results and convened the Appellate Court and our Staff to create the Judicial Branch's inaugural Strategic Plan.

This document reflects all of the input and strategic gathered above in a comprehensive written plan. A logic model is used to show the relationship between the goals, outcomes and activities for each of the Judicial Branch components. In the future, the Judicial Branch plans to use this Strategic Plan as the basis for the annual report presented to the General Council and for budgeting purposes.

BACKGROUND

Wilton Rancheria Government Organization

Pursuant to the Constitution of the Wilton Rancheria, the government of Wilton Rancheria shall be composed of a Chairperson, a Vice-Chairperson, a Tribal Council, a General Council, and a Tribal Court. Except as provided in this Constitution, the Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson, Tribal Council, General Council, and Tribal Court shall be separate and distinct and shall not exercise the powers and functions delegated to any other officer or entity. The Judicial Code provides the Tribal Council's vision for the Tribal Court by defining the Tribal Court's Structure and Jurisdiction.



Structure of the Judicial Branch

The Constitution of Wilton Rancheria provides that the judicial power of the Tribe shall be vested in the Tribal Court. The Judicial Code establishes that the Wilton Rancheria Tribe's Judicial Branch consists of the Tribal Court, The Appellate Panel and the Traditional Court. Together they are known as the Wilton Rancheria Courts. These three courts work together to ensure a fair and accessible system of justice.

The Hierarchy of the Judicial Branch is:

- a. Tribal Court
- b. Traditional Court
- c. Appellate Panel

Each of these levels of the Judicial Branch may have programs that operate within them.

The Tribal Court

The Tribal Court is the initial level of review when disputes or controversies arise that fall under the jurisdiction of the Tribal Court to resolve.

The Traditional Court

The Traditional Court serves as a non-adversarial forum for dispute resolution guided by a panel of elders from the Tribe. The Traditional Court shall advise the Tribal Court on matters of custom and tradition, which represent the Tribe's common law. In this manner, the traditional values of Wilton Rancheria are at the forefront of the Tribal Court's decision-making process.

Appellate Panel

Finally, the Appellate Panel will be available to review decisions of the Tribal Court and decide whether the Tribal Court's decisions were consistent with Tribal law.

GUIDING STATEMENTS

The Judicial Branch of Wilton Rancheria officially adopts the Journey Statement and Vision Statements used in the Administrative Branches' Strategic Plan. The Court Strategic Planning Team has created a Mission Statement that is specific to the court to further define our guiding principles.

Journey Statement

As Miwok and Nisenan people of Wilton Rancheria, original stewards of the Sacramento Valley and Foothills, we shall protect and enhance our Tribal sovereignty, cultural traditions, and homelands. By promoting health, wellness, economic success, and education, the Tribe will continue to build a sovereign nation that honors its history and ancestors, while securing the future for following generations.

Vision

A culturally and economically thriving community of self-governing, resilient people united by shared values and traditions, reflective of our ancestors' dreams.

Mission Statement

The Judicial Branch is dedicated to enhancing the sovereignty of the Wilton Rancheria by providing a service-oriented justice system aiming for peaceful resolution of legal disputes and questions in a non-adversarial way. The Court strives to be inclusive, welcoming, and friendly, always considering the generational trauma present in the Wilton Rancheria Community and promoting a gentle approach to justice. The Court will ensure fairness to all participants by ensuring accessible court processes and procedures; maintaining standards of confidentiality; and providing everyone an opportunity to share their story and be heard. The Judicial Branch shall be governed by the rule of law, operating without bias, independently from other branches of government while still maintaining accountability to all elected officials and the General Council of the Tribe through transparent planning and reporting.

JUDICIAL BRANCH JURISDICTION

Jurisdiction Defined

Jurisdiction is the authority to hear and decide matters granted by a constitution and legislation of a sovereign government. The Wilton Constitution and the Judicial Code establishes the jurisdiction of the Tribal Court as follows:

- A.** Generally, the Tribal Court shall have original jurisdiction over all cases and controversies, both criminal and civil, in law or in equity, arising under the Constitution, laws, customs, and traditions of Wilton Rancheria, including cases in which Wilton Rancheria, or its officials and employees, shall be a party. The jurisdiction of the Wilton Rancheria Courts extends to the fullest extent authorized by the Tribe's Constitution, the Tribe's laws and federal law.
- B.** Territorial Jurisdiction defines the geographic scope of the Tribal Court's authority. The territorial jurisdiction of the Wilton Rancheria Courts shall include all land owned by the Tribe, whether or not held in trust for the benefit of the Tribe, and shall include but not be limited to lands, waterways, roadways, easements and rights-of-way.
- C.** Subject Matter Jurisdiction defines the types of cases that the Tribal Court can hear and decide. The Wilton Rancheria Courts are courts of general jurisdiction and have jurisdiction to hear all civil and criminal actions authorized by the Tribe's laws or federal law, including all actions arising in law and equity.
- D.** Personal Jurisdiction governs which people the Tribal Court can exercise authority over in specific cases. The Wilton Rancheria Courts' personal jurisdiction extends, to the furthest extent permitted under the Tribe's law and federal law.
- E.** Juvenile Jurisdiction involves specific matters that fall under each of the other types of jurisdiction listed above when a minor is involved. The Wilton Rancheria Courts shall have exclusive original jurisdiction of all proceedings arising under the Tribe's child placement policies.

Types of Cases in the Wilton Rancheria Laws

The Following types of cases are currently supported in the Tribal Court by Tribal law:

- Review of government decision – appeals of decisions made by a tribal entity filed by a tribal member or in some cases employee.
- Government violation action – petitions or citations filed by the Tribe for violations of tribal law.
- Civil claims – petitions related to recovery of money or other damages if supported in tribal law.
- Violations of the Conduct and Ethics Act by Government Officials – private actions against government officials for misconduct.
- Appeals – asking the Tribal Court Appellate Panel to review a decision from the Tribal Court.
- Juvenile cases – cases involving the welfare of a child; foster care, guardianships, or adoptions – no specific Tribal Law but authorized in the Judicial Code.

Barriers to Exercising Full Jurisdiction

There are barriers and challenges to the Tribal Court exercising the full authority it has been granted under the Constitution and Judicial Code. These challenges are outlined below.

Limited Land Base

The Tribe's trust land is dedicated to the Tribe's economic sustainability housing the casino and future related ventures. The Tribe has land that is not in trust that creates some jurisdiction but currently this land has not been fully developed. The Tribe does not have "tribal" housing so there is no central land base where members reside. This affects the exercise of the Tribal Court territorial and personal jurisdiction.

No Tribal Law Enforcement

The Tribe employs security guards for the safety and security of the administrative offices and contracts with Elk Grove Police Department for security services at the Casino. Neither of these entities has the authority or ability, currently, to cite violations of Tribal Law into the Tribal Court. Additionally, neither of these entities can enforce Tribal Court Orders. This affects the exercise of the Tribal Court territorial, subject matter, personal and juvenile jurisdiction.

Limited ICWA Department

There is a limited Indian Child Welfare Act department currently authorized to work on cases under the Indian Child Welfare Act filed in County Court. This department has no official authority in Tribal Court cases. This affects the exercise of the Tribal Court subject matter, personal and juvenile jurisdiction.

No Attorney General/Prosecutor

The Tribe does not have a legal representative designated to enforce the tribes' laws by filing cases in the Tribal Court. The tribe depends on the County prosecutor, state Attorney General and Federal counterparts. This affects the exercise of the Tribal Court territorial, subject matter, personal and juvenile jurisdiction.

No Juvenile Codes

The Court receives inquiries for assistance in juvenile protection cases such as guardianships but there is no tribal law governing these cases. This prevents the Tribal Court from effectively hearing contested cases. This affects the exercise of the subject matter, personal and juvenile jurisdiction.

No Family Law Codes (Child Custody and Support)

The Tribe has no laws relating to "family law matters" including divorce, child custody and child support. These cases all go to the County Court. This affects the exercise of the Tribal Court subject matter, and personal jurisdiction.

No Protection Codes

The Tribe does not have any laws to protect tribal members in family/intimate violence situations. Family abuse and protection cases all go to the County Court. This affects the exercise of the Tribal Court subject matter, and personal jurisdiction.

GOALS, OUTCOMES AND ACTIVITIES

Tribal Court Logic Model

Goal/Objective	Outcomes	Activities 2023 - 2025
<u>Culturally Informed</u> Court reflects and responds to the Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased focus on traditional court resolution Youth involved in court programs/planning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Open house event at the court Propose changes to rules to encourage informal cases in traditional court (pre-filing cases) Provide Administrative assistance to Traditional Court & Youth Court
<u>Access to Justice</u> Court is fair and accessible to the community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased awareness of court process More cases filed by community Expanded self-help services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Publish laws online Utilize law students for court projects Hire bailiff for service of process Engage tribal bar association Recruit and train court advocates <u>Self help:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create policies and procedures Add types of services to website Create guides for case types Provide clinics on common topics Hire paralegal to assist with self help Coordinate with state court self help Data collection - evaluations
<u>Tribal Sovereignty</u> Court is Exercising Full Jurisdiction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Additional tribal court case types Increased partnership with justice system stakeholders More cases filed by the tribe More collaboration with tribal departments 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Propose abuse prevention/protection laws Explore family law program – child support and custody Partner with county and federal jurisdictions on cases (joint jurisdiction) Utilize law students for research Support expansion of tribal departments, law enforcement, A.G. & social services Develop process for referrals to other tribal departments
<u>Health and Wellness</u> Court maintains Safe and Appropriate Facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved court security New Justice center is constructed on tribal lands 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hire bailiff for court events Active shooter training for all tribal staff Utilize metal detectors Review mail processing procedures Assist in land acquisition and planning Identify construction funding

Traditional Court Logic Model

Goal/Objective	Outcomes	Activities 2023-2025
<u>Culturally Informed</u> Court reflects and responds to the Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More cases heard in the Traditional Court • Youth involved in Court Programs/Planning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct Hand Games Tournament • Planning for youth group/court – supervision and oversight • Participate in Open House • Hear informal cases • Assist with incorporating traditional language into the Tribal Court
<u>Access to Justice</u> Court is fair and accessible to the community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All Traditional Court Elders prepared to hear cases fairly and impartially • Parties feel process is transparent and fair 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop training requirements for all peacemakers • Complete additional peacemaking training • Complete confidentiality training • Start hearing with relationship disclosure or any other conflicts, explain that they will be related to the parties • Review grievance board policies for ideas on process
<u>Tribal Sovereignty</u> Court is Exercising Full Jurisdiction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provided support for legislation to increase case types • All possible parties are being served by the Traditional Court 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review and comment on new laws • Meet with tribal council as needed to support new case types • Consider expanding services to include non-native participants • Consider informal family law peacemaking/mediation • Develop rules and policies for cases with non-natives (as needed, if approved)
<u>Health and Wellness</u> Court maintains Safe and Appropriate Facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tribal culture is reflected in court facilities and functions • Respect for the Court is balanced with friendliness 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide culturally appropriate blessings for court facilities proceedings, and functions. • Provide advice on accessibility to all community and elders. • Name tags or plaques for tribal elders • Create Tribal Color Guard

Appellate Court Logic Model

Goal/Objective	Outcomes	Activities 2023-2025
<u>Culturally Informed</u> Court reflects and responds to the Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Traditional court is utilized in appellate court Appellate judges participate in court community events Appellate judge demeanor reflects tribes' values 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop process for cultural advisory opinions Participate in open house Participate in hand games tournament Meet with traditional court to discuss format for appeals – how to interact with participants
<u>Access to Justice</u> Court is fair and accessible to the community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Court Precedent is recorded and followed Court is Independent from other government branches 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Publish judicial opinions to members/public Provide constitutional training to elected officials and general council Create appellate judge orientation – tribal laws and customs
<u>Tribal Sovereignty</u> Court is Exercising Full Jurisdiction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Developed capacity to hear time sensitive case types Judges are qualified to hear every case brought on appeal Advocates/Attorneys are qualified to appear in Tribal Court 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assist as pro-tem/specially assigned judges as needed in Tribal Court Create process to fill judge vacancies Create training plans/requirements for tribal court judges and attorneys Attend trainings/conferences Sponsor a Tribal Bar Association education event
<u>Health and Wellness</u> Court maintains Safe and Appropriate Facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hearings are welcoming and follow all procedures Court Mission is reflected in the Court facilities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create policies and procedures for conducting in-person and hybrid appeals Create written and video instructions for court appearances Post the Wilton Rancheria Constitution on the wall in the “Court Room” Review/revise contempt procedures