



## Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma

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**Gary Batton**  
*Chief*

**Jack Austin, Jr.**  
*Assistant Chief*

December 13, 2021

Honorable Kevin Stitt  
Governor, State of Oklahoma  
2300 N Lincoln Blvd.  
Oklahoma City, OK 73105

Re: Tribal-State Hunting and Fishing Compact

Halito Governor Stitt,

I am writing you regarding the Hunting and Fishing Compact between the State of Oklahoma and the Choctaw Nation. Our partnership was originally set to expire on December 31, 2019, but you and I agreed to sign a one-year extension to the Wildlife Compact and renew it before it expired. The agreement is set to expire once again on December 31, 2021. As I understand your communication of November 30, 2021, you have rejected our request for an extension. I am not sure why the State has changed its view of this mutually beneficial compact. This is disheartening to hear because I truly thought that you wanted what was best for Oklahoma.

On August 31, 2016, Governor Mary Fallin signed the Hunting and Fishing Compact with the Choctaw Nation, signaling the willingness to work together with our tribal government in a way that, protected our sovereign rights, was mutually beneficial to all Oklahomans, and protected one of our most precious resources, fish and wildlife. The Partnership between our two governments, brings nearly \$2 million in additional funds annually to the Oklahoma Department of Wildlife. These funds are used for the enhancement of conservation across the entire state.

At the Choctaw Nation, we're proud to help contribute to the betterment of all Oklahomans and our shared resources. If you do not renew these compacts the \$2 million will be lost for all Oklahomans. I originally signed the compact because it benefits our tribal members and the rest of Oklahoma.

In my role as Chief, I work toward the best interests of our tribal members. As an Oklahoman, I ensure our actions benefit our neighbors and the state as a whole. In this case, cooperation between our two governments best serves the needs of all involved, and the Choctaw Nation hopes to find respectful, cooperative ways to manage wildlife and protect the outdoor lifestyle of both of our citizens.

Because of your failure to work together for all Oklahomans I must move forward in a way that exercises and strengthens the Choctaw Nation's sovereignty and our federally protected rights. I will begin exercising our jurisdiction to regulate hunting and fishing within our reservation boundaries and beyond.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Gary Batton". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Gary Batton, Chief  
Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma