



C. L. "BUTCH" OTTER  
GOVERNOR  
March 16, 2009

The Honorable Chief Allan  
Chairman  
Coeur d'Alene Tribe  
P.O. Box 408  
Coeur d'Alene, ID 83851

Dear Chairman Allan,

Thank you for contacting me about a possible closure of the Coeur d'Alene's Old Mission State Park. I appreciate the opportunity to respond.

First, I want to assure you that no decision to close Coeur d'Alene's Old Mission has been made by the Idaho Parks and Recreation Board (Board). The Board – not the Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation (IDPR) director – has the decision-making authority for the closure of parks. Closure of Coeur d'Alene's Old Mission has not even been discussed by the Board.

The controversy over the possible closure of Coeur d'Alene's Old Mission began with a newspaper article, prompted by the first news of Idaho's dire budget projections and questions on how the shortfalls would impact state agencies. A reporter asked IDPR Director Robert Meinen how the agency would evaluate the closing of parks if budgets were significantly cut. Director Meinen responded with possible scenarios that might be employed in that event, including the closure of Coeur d'Alene's Old Mission.

Director Meinen has since apologized to me for those comments and I, on his behalf, apologize to you for those comments.

Let me assure you the state of Idaho stands behind the operational agreements that have been signed by the Coeur d'Alene Tribe and IDPR. Now, more than ever, the State, Coeur d'Alene Tribe and local communities need to work together to continue preserving Coeur d'Alene's Old Mission and perpetuate its historical significance for future generations to enjoy.

Again, let me assure you that there has been no decision made to close any of Idaho's state parks, including Coeur d'Alene's Old Mission. Thank you again for contacting me.

As Always – Idaho, "Esto Perpetua"

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "C.L. Butch Otter".  
C.L. "Butch" Otter  
Governor of Idaho

CLO/sg