

## **Proposed Youth Shelter Expansion in Tahlequah, Oklahoma**

**Notice of Availability - Draft Environmental Assessment:** In accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), the Cherokee Nation, on behalf of the Department of Justice's (DOJ) Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA), has completed a Draft Environmental Assessment (EA) evaluating the potential environmental impacts of the Cherokee Nation's proposal to renovate and expand the John A. Ketcher Youth Shelter in Tahlequah, Oklahoma (the Proposed Action). NEPA requires that federal agencies consider the effects of a proposed action and any reasonable alternatives on the human environment. This Draft EA evaluates the potential impacts that would result from the implementation of the Proposed Action as compared to the No Action alternative.

The Draft EA is available upon request. Please send an email request to [brad-asbill@cherokee.org](mailto:brad-asbill@cherokee.org) The Draft EA will be provided in electronic format unless a hard copy is specifically requested.

**Project Title:** John A. Ketcher Youth Shelter Expansion Project

**Project Proponent:** BJA

**Project Location:** 21834 South Jules Valdez Road, Tahlequah, OK, 74464

**Project Description:** The Proposed Action considered under this Draft EA is to renovate and expand the John A. Ketcher Youth Shelter in Tahlequah, Oklahoma from 5,600 square feet to approximately 9,200 square feet. The expansion would extend from the southern section of the existing building into a previously disturbed vacant lot. The proposed expansion would provide five additional offices, a conference room, a multipurpose room, a life-skills kitchen classroom, and two emergency use showers. Proposed renovations would provide updates to the technology and phone systems in the existing building.

Once renovation and expansion activities are complete, the Cherokee Nation would be able to enhance existing social services for homeless and runaway youth; victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking; victims of crime; and others in welfare-related crises, by providing these services at a centralized site.

BJA is accepting comments on this EA from January 13, 2023, through the end of the day of February 13, 2023. Comments should be submitted by email to [brad-asbill@cherokee.org](mailto:brad-asbill@cherokee.org), or mailed to Brad Asbill, Cherokee Nation Environmental Programs, 206 E. Allen Road, Tahlequah, OK 74464.

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