

Claims Court: Seminoles Own Most of Florida

The Seminole Indians established legal ownership to almost all of Florida in a U.S. Claims Court ruling Friday.

According to the court decision, the Seminoles must be paid for 32 million acres. They probably will receive about \$40 million from the federal government.

The court's unanimous decision still could be appealed to the Supreme Court.

The \$40 million if paid, will match the \$40 million spent by the government in the 1830's to remove the Seminoles by force from Florida and send them to Oklahoma, along with four other Indian nations who had been living peacefully on the Eastern seaboard.

Long, fierce resistance by the Seminoles, under the leadership of the Indian warrior Osceola was finally overcome in 1837. But 300 persons were never captured. Their descendants live today in the Florida Everglades.