Foothill Nisenan
In the Wolf Creek Watershed

Language
The word “Nisenan” means “from among us” or “from our side”. The Nisenan language is part of the Proto-Maidu parent language group, which has led to the Nisenan mistakenly being called “Maidu”. Each region in Nisenan territory had its own unique dialect, tribal leadership, customs and culture. “Seyo” means waterway.

Way of Life
The Nisenan people thrived here for thousands of years. The forests were full of pines, cedars and oaks, and grasses filled the meadows. There were herds of deer and elk, as well as wolves and bear. The streams were filled with crayfish, trout and, in the spring and fall, salmon. The wetlands were home to numerous species of water fowl and abundance was everywhere—making the Nisenan a very wealthy people.

Territory
These Foothill Nisenan lived in the Bear and Yuba river watersheds including Wolf Creek. There are many more undocumented town sites than those featured on this map.

Today’s Nisenan Culture
The Nisenan once had a reservation in Nevada County called the Nevada City Rancheria. It was “terminated” in 1964. At that time the Nisenan lost their Federal recognition. The California Heritage Indigenous Research Project (CHIRP) was created to research, document, preserve and protect Nisenan Culture. CHIRP has an important role in building support and visibility for the Tribe as it seeks restoration of its Federal status. The Tribe continues its culture and is living here in their ancestral homelands today.

www.nisenan.org