

Sides struggle to resolve Navajo water claims

PHOENIX (AP) — A settlement between the Navajos and New Mexico for water from a major Colorado River tributary has forced Arizona and the federal government back to the table to sort out the tribe's other claims, which include water and money to build delivery systems.

The task is tangled in a morass of laws, compacts, political interests and a water supply already stretched too thin. But failure would thrust the issue

into court and threaten water supplies for millions.

"We want to settle the Navajo and Hopi claims to the rivers in Arizona," said Herb Guenther, director of the Arizona Department of Water Resources. "It's one of our high priorities to get this resolved, for the benefit of not only the tribe but also for water users in Arizona, to give them more certainty for the future."

Arizona negotiated sporadically with the Navajos until 2003, when the tribe sued the federal government, accusing it of ignoring the water needs of the reservation.

Arizona officials say they want the tribe to drop the suit before the state agrees to a settlement.

"We've always had the idea they'd drop the lawsuit if they had a settlement," said Greg Houtz, counsel for the state Water Resources Department.

He said the state fears the suit could derail a long-sought short-term agreement among the states that rely on the Colorado.

What further clouded talks was the agreement reached in 2005 between the Navajos and New Mexico. The deal settled the tribe's claims to the San Juan River, a major Colorado River tributary, and proposed a system of pipelines to help deliver water to reservation communities in eastern New Mexico.

"It was a huge accomplishment for the Navajo," said Lena Fowler, vice chairman of the tribe's Water Rights Commission.

"We're not meeting our water needs right now. People wonder why we don't have economic development on Navajo. It's because we don't have water infrastructure. It's a constant cycle that we have to live with here."

Feds look into sale of 'tribal memberships'

WICHITA, Kan. (AP) — Vicki Torres, an illegal immigrant who works here as a tax accountant, shrugged off the \$80 she spent in June to buy a tribal membership into the Kaweah Indian Nation.

Torres, a Mexican national who has been in this country for about 18 months, said she had been told by a tribal representative at a church gathering that she could use the membership to get a Social Security number.

Losing that money was a risk, Torres said, that she was willing to take: "I am always trying to find a way I can be here legally."

The tribe — which was denied federal recognition in 1984 — is at the center of a multistate federal investigation into an alleged scam to sell tribal memberships to undocumented workers with the promise the documents would protect them from deportation.

On Monday, the Texas Attorney General's Office sued tribal leader Malcolm L. Webber, also known as Grand Chief Thunderbird IV, the Kaweah Indian Nation Inc. and two tribal members.

The civil lawsuit alleged they fraudulently sold memberships by claiming that tribal members could get a Social Security number, protection from deportation and U.S. citizenship once the tribe is federally recognized as an Indian tribe.

Revelations about chairman fuel rift within tribe

BOSTON (AP) — The revelation that Mashpee Wampanoag tribal Chairman Glenn Marshall lied about his military service and was convicted of rape in 1981 is fueling a rift within the tribe as they seek to build a \$1 billion casino in Massachusetts.

One of five members of the tribe shunned by the tribal council in December is calling for an emergency meeting of the tribe Monday to discuss the situation.

"Our people understand that we have been called to action and plan to follow up with Mr. Marshall's announcement," Michelle Fernandes, one of five members shunned by the council, told the Cape Cod Times. "We're looking to prevent Glenn Marshall from returning to the tribal council."

But tribal vice chairman Shawn Hendricks said only he has the authority to call meetings of the tribal council. Marshall handed over his day-to-day duties to Hendricks after the revelations were made public in a story in the Cape Cod Times on Friday.

"As vice chair of the tribal council, I will call official meetings of the tribe and in fact have called for a meeting of the tribal council to meet in executive session tomorrow evening to discuss the matters of the past week," Hendricks said in a statement issued Sunday afternoon.

Scott Ferson, a spokesman for the tribe who represents Hendricks, said the tribal council plans to discuss Glenn Marshall's decision to step down.

He also said the council will move ahead with their plans to build a casino.

The next step for the tribe is to file a petition with the federal government to take more than 500 acres of land in land Middleborough and 100 acres in Mashpee into a trust.

Beside permanently banning Marshall from the tribal council, Fernandes and the other shunned members of the tribe filed a lawsuit trying to force the tribe's financial records to be made more public.

After the tribe received federal recognition in February, a state court threw out the lawsuit saying it no longer had standing to hear the case. The case has been appealed to a federal court.

In an interview with The

Boston Globe published Saturday, Marshall acknowledged the rape conviction and lying about his military record.

"It's an apology to my family, tribe, and the Commonwealth," Marshall said. "I could only ask that they could forgive me, because I'm not a bad person."

Marshall had been the tribe's public face during much of its journey to win federal recognition and its push to open the state's first casino.

On Friday, The Cape Cod Times reported that Marshall was convicted in 1981 of raping a 22-year-old visitor to the Cape. Marshall was accused of sexually assaulting the woman in a secluded spot in West Barnstable after offering to drive

her from a party.

Marshall, 57, was sentenced to five years in state prison, but served just three months before being released on probation.

The paper also raised questions about Marshall's military record.

At a congressional oversight hearing in 2004, Marshall testified he survived the siege of Khe Sahn. But during the siege, Marshall was still a senior in high school in Falmouth.

The Legislature still needs to approve expanded gambling before a full-scale casino can be built. Gov. Deval Patrick, who made a surprise visit to Mashpee when the tribe celebrated its federal recognition, has said he would announce his gambling position around Labor Day.

Eddie Palmanteer, chaired Colville tribal council, dies at 75

DISAUTEL, Wash. (AP) — Eddie Adrian Palmanteer Jr., a longtime Colville tribal leader who helped settle a 40-year dispute over land flooded by the reservoir behind

Grand Coulee Dam, is dead at 75.

Palmanteer, former chairman of the tribal council, died last Friday after a long illness at his home in this hamlet on the

Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation in northcentral Washington state. His death was confirmed last week by the current tribal chairman, Michael

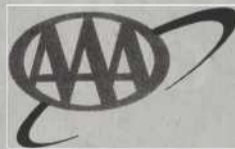
E. Marchand.

Palmanteer also was a former superintendent of the Colville Indian Agency under the Bureau of Indian Affairs and board president of Colville Tribal En-

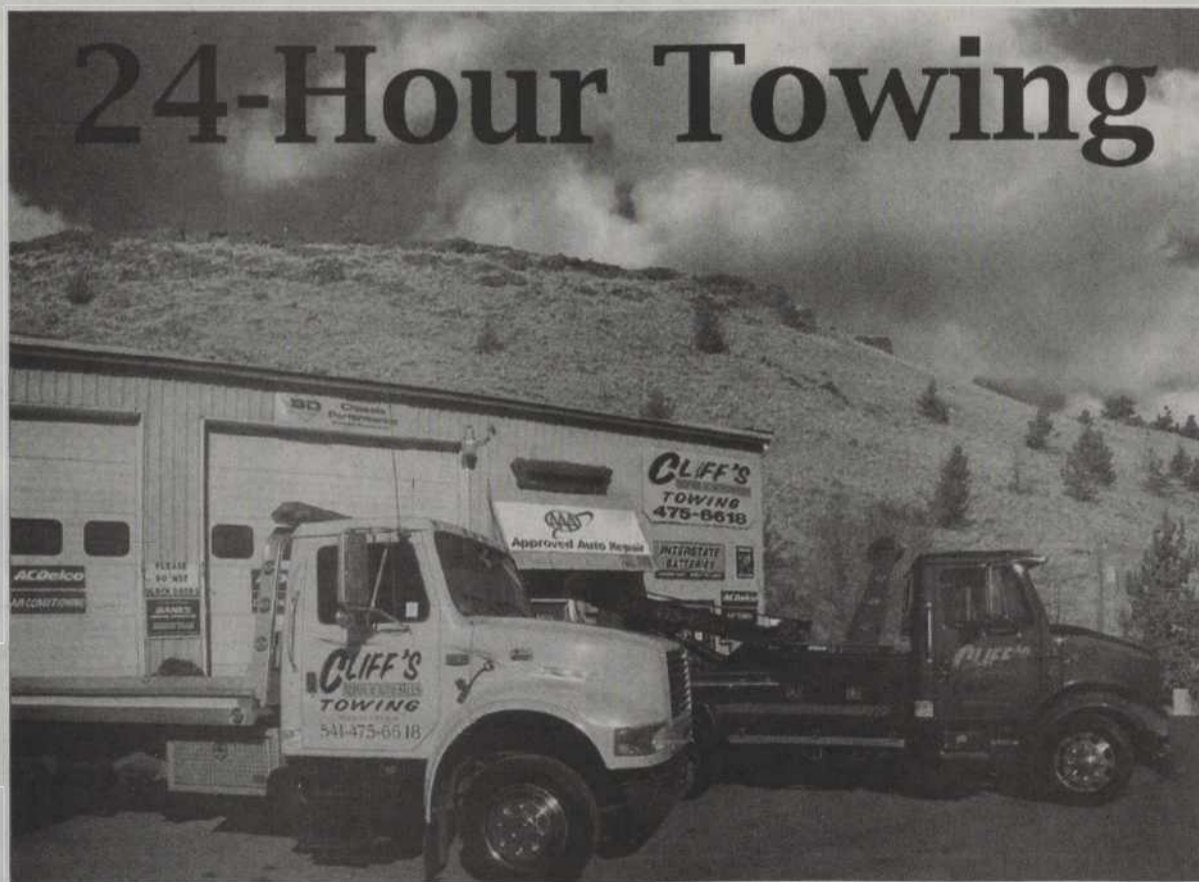
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