



Spilyay Tymoo

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Casino clears hurdle, still faces challenge

By Dave McMechan
Spilyay Tymoo

The Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs and the state of Oregon now have a federally approved gaming compact for the tribes' proposed Cascade Locks casino.

The tribes and the state submitted the compact to the Department of the Interior for approval in November of last year. The agency took no action regarding the application, which results in approval.

The compact sets out terms of agreement between the tribes and the local community of Cascade Locks, regarding law enforcement, fire protection, the number of slot machines, among other issues.

Provisions for a scholarship fund from gaming proceeds are included in the compact, as is an agreement by the tribes not to build on property located outside of Hood River, if the Cascade Locks property is taken into trust.

That recently approved compact is an updated version of one that the state and the tribes negotiated in 2005, which the federal government rejected. The Interior Department at that time declined to approve the compact because, the Secretary of the Interior said at the time, the land in question was not yet in trust. The land is still not in trust, but the compact is now place.

There will need to be a "two-part determination" before the critical step is taken to bring the Cascade Locks site into trust. The two-part determination test of the Indian Gaming Regulatory

The two-part determination, and the new Governor's response to the determination, remain significant challenges for the Cascade Locks casino proposal.

Act requires a finding that the proposed gaming enterprise is in the best interest of the tribes and its members, and does not harm the neighboring communities.

Gov. Kitzhaber will have to concur with the two-part determination. Meanwhile, the Interior Department has indicated that no new two-part determinations for tribal casinos will be issued until spring. The two-part determination, and the Governor's response to

the determination, remain significant challenges for the Cascade Locks casino proposal. Still, the approval of the compact was good news.

"The compact is important because it establishes the legal framework for operation of a gaming facility at Cascade Locks," said Louie Pitt, director of tribal Government Affairs.

Following the release of the Final Environmental Impact Statement last August, "The approval of the compact means that another major hurdle has been cleared, leading the way to final federal approval for the project," said Pitt.

The casino would provide 400 construction jobs and 1,700 full-time jobs once the facility is in operation.

Tribes heard at Summit of the Horse

By Terri Harber
Spilyay Tymoo

The amount of attention the first-time event received was "fantastic," said Sue Wallis, one of the organizers of The Summit of the Horse, held last week in Las Vegas.

Singer Michael Martin Murphey, known for the 1970s radio staple "Wildfire," lent his support to the cause through a written message. Dr. Temple Gradin, an autistic woman who became a successful veterinarian and author immortalized in an award-winning HBO film, signed autographs for the attendees.

This summit focused on the sensitive issue of resurrecting the horse slaughtering business in the U.S., and drew attention from media outlets across the country and even gained some international coverage.

Protesters also abounded, however. They stood along the Strip with signs and spoke out loudly against the event. Others opposing the idea of restarting the practice attended and asked questions of anyone who was interested in conversing.

More than 200 ranchers, government officials, wildlife advocates and tribal officials—including representatives of the Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs—attended the summit, said Wallis, vice president of United Horseman.

"We were impressed with their focus, their efforts," she said of the people there representing Native American tribes. "They were well represented."

Horse processing was halted in the U.S. in 2007 after animal rights activists made public poor practices at slaughterhouses. There were only three of them in operation then.

It's still not illegal to be in the horse slaughtering business. There aren't any federal inspectors to look over horse carcasses meant for human consumption, however, because Congress stopped allocating money for it, according to Wallis.

She and other critics of the 2007 federal action contend it has contributed to the horse overpopulation problems that plague federal lands and Indian reservations. They also say it hurts the U.S. because the operations simply go on in Canada and Mexico, and that the current arrangement allows more harmful and potentially unsanitary processing practices to occur.

The group has created standards of operation and is involved in a variety of outreach endeavors to get their message across: It's a viable business.

Range overpopulation

Horses are livestock, said Jason Smith, manager of the tribes' Range and Agriculture Department. He is involved with United Horsemen and is president of the similarly focused and renamed National Tribal Horse Coalition. He was also one of the featured speakers at the summit.

"Nobody is buying horses right now because they know they can't get rid of them. And it's affecting our natural resources," he said after returning home last week from the summit.

See HORSE SUMMIT on page 6

Duck Spirit

Oregon Ducks fans show team spirit Monday before the BCS Championship game. Gathering at the administration building were Delson Suppah and Francelia Miller (front); JoyDee Smith, Beverly Surface, Benson Heath, Rena Suppah and Toby Smith-Morales (middle row from left); Jonathan Smith, Charles Jackson, Will Robbins, Buttons Miller and Lonny Macy (back from left). Benson Heath, director of tribal personnel, is an alum of Eastern Oregon University, but is now among the most ardent of Duck fans. It was unfortunate, to say the least, that in Monday night's game the Auburn Tigers edged the Ducks 22-19.



Dave McMechan/Spilyay

Teleco Update

Project will bring 19 local jobs

By Dave McMechan
Spilyay Tymoo

The Warm Springs Telecommunication Company main office will be housed in the former apparel building at the industrial park.

"It's an ideal building for our purposes," said Adam Haas, the company general manager. "There's a large open area that we can use to build out the central office."

The central office area will house electronic equipment, office space for the staff, and the customer service area.

The apparel building has been mostly vacant for several years, with the tribal Construction enterprise currently using only part of the building.

The Warm Springs Telecommunications Co. (WSTC), tribally owned and chartered, will create new 19 local jobs, said Marsha Spellman, company mar-

keting and regulatory director.

The company last year was awarded \$5.5 million in funding, as a grant and a loan, last year through the federal stimulus program.

When in operation, the company will provide telephone and other communications services to the reservation.

WSTC recently chose an architect, Steele and Associates of Bend, to design the remodeling of the apparel building. The Construction Enterprise will remain at one end of the building, and the WSTC offices and electronic center will be at the other end.

The plan is for the office to be in operation by late summer, said Spellman. The first two WSTC customers will be Kah-Nee-Ta and the tribal administration building, followed by residences and other organizations on the reservation.

An early challenge facing the WSTC is the recruiting of people to fill the 19 positions. Some of these jobs will re-

"To be a success, this has to be run and operated by the members."

Adam Haas
WSTC general manager

quire specialized training in the maintenance and operation of telecommunication equipment. Other positions will require office skills such as bookkeeping and customer relations.

A primary goal of the WSTC, along with successful operation, is the employment of tribal members, said Haas. "To be a success, this has to be run and operated by members," he said.

WSTC is working with Marcia Soliz, tribal Human Resources employment services manager, and Laura Switzler, job placement specialist of Workforce Education and De-

velopment Department, on hiring and other aspects of the teleco project.

Soliz and Switzler recently visited the Fort Mojave Indian Reservation in California, near Nevada, where the tribe operates a telecommunications company. The visit to Fort Mojave was a chance to see firsthand the operation of a successful tribal telecommunications enterprise, Soliz said.

The experience was educational and inspiring, said Soliz. (Her report on the visit is printed on page 4.)

The WSTC board of directors at this time are Sal Sahme, chairman; Robert Macy, secretary-treasurer; Ken Smith, and Mitch Moore, board vice chairman, who is the general manager of Clear Creek telecommunications company.

WSTC estimates a timeline of about three years to bring its services to the entire reservation.