Around Indian Country

Appeal planned against Cowlitz

The Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde plan to appeal a court ruling on the Cowlitz Tribal casino to the U.S. Supreme Court.

The Grand Ronde plan to appeal a ruling that allows the Cowlitz to build a casino 15 miles north of the Portland-Vancouver metropolitan area.

Unlike earlier appeals at lower court, though, the Grand Ronde may be the only party to the appeal.

Earlier appeals included other opponents who apparently may not participate in the case that could go to the U.S. Supreme Court.

Construction of the Cowlitz' Ilani Resort and Casino is already well under way,

and is scheduled to open in April.

The location is along Interstate 5 north of Ridgefield and west of La Center.

The city of Vancouver was an opponent, but has dropped out of the lawsuit against the tribe. Clark County may end its involvement as well, leaving the Grand Ronde, the group Citizens Against Reservation Shopping, and a group of La Center cardrooms.

Whether these last two opponents would participate in the appeal to the Supreme Court was not yet determined as of recently.

The U.S. Supreme Court sino at Cascade Locks.

takes a small fraction of the cases that are brought up on appeal. And even if the Supreme Court decides to hear the case, a ruling is unlikely before Ilani opens. An injunction is a remote possibility.

The Grand Ronde said it would not have challenged the Cowlitz if a reservation had been chosen closer to the tribe's "traditional homelands" 60 miles north. In other words, farther from the Portland metro than Spirit Mountain.

A decade ago the Grand Ronde opposed the Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs' plan to build a ca-

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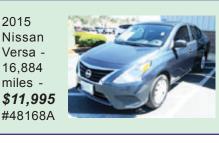
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Guilty plea in Shoshone-Bannock case

Cody Ray Blackman, 33, of Salem, pleaded guilty recently in U.S. District Court to the theft of money from the Shoshone-Bannock Tribes.

Blackman was indicted by the federal grand jury in Pocatello a year ago.

He was previously employed by the Shoshone-Bannock Tribes as the manager of the Shoshone-Bannock Hotel Events Center.

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