



SMOKE SIGNALS

NOVEMBER 1, 2006

A Publication of the Grand Ronde Tribe

www.grandronde.org

UMPQUA

MOLALLA

ROGUE RIVER

KALAPUYA

CHASTA

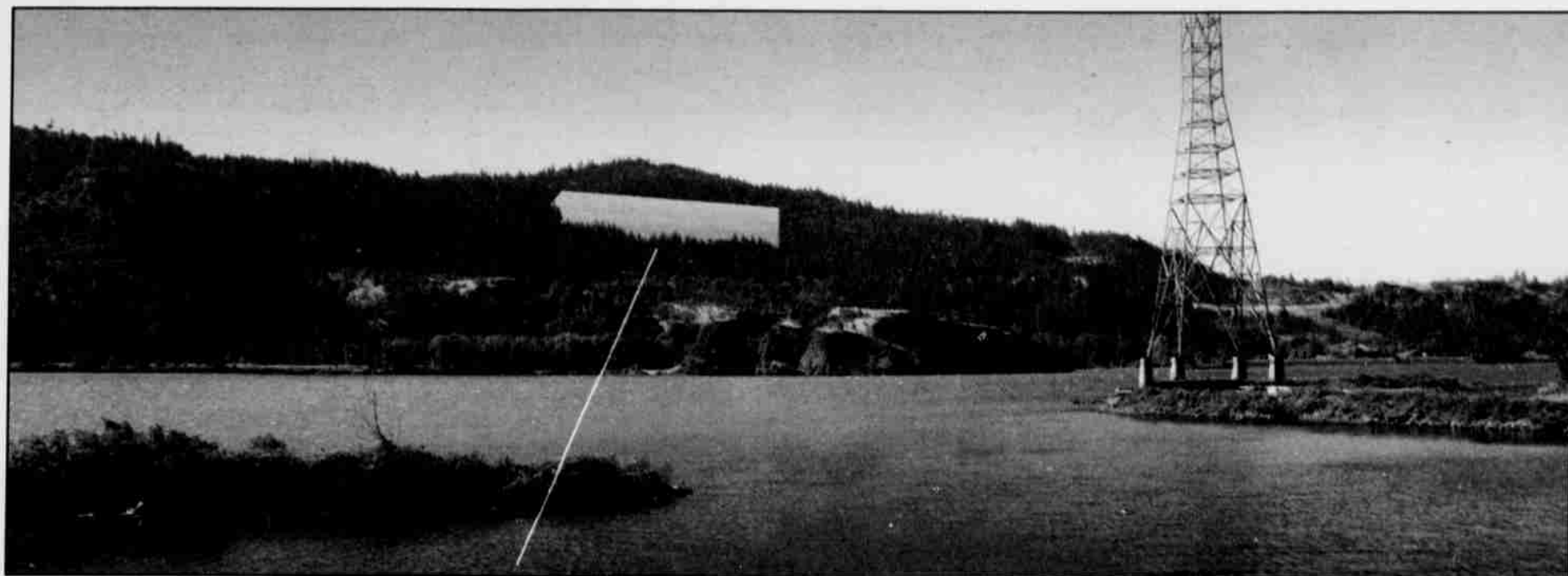


Photo and graphic courtesy of Golder Associates

The proposed alternate site for a Hood River casino (blue inset) is isolated atop cliffs high above the Columbia River Gorge. There is no feasible access to the site from any direction.

Report Reveals Long-Threatened Hood River Casino A Mirage

■ The detailed report concludes the Hood River site is not a practical or feasible site for the Warm Springs casino. Coalition urges elected officials to reject a Gorge casino and embrace an on reservation site in fast-growing Central Oregon.

By Siobhan Taylor

Through the Coalition for Oregon's Future, and with an array of supporters, the Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde presented a report that proves the Warm Springs Tribe's threat to build a casino in Hood River is simply not possible. It is a false choice.

The report states, "...a Hood River site is not a permissible, practicable or potentially legal site for the Warm Springs Casino."

The Governor's position was that failure to allow the Warm Springs to move off reservation into Cascade Locks would mean the Warm Springs Tribe would build a casino on the trust land they owned near Hood River.

"We do not believe there is a feasible or practical scenario for locating a casino at the proposed Hood River site," said Grant Bailey, a Senior Consultant with Golder Associates who prepared the report. The firm is a global environmental and engineering services firm. They performed the study in conjunction with Otak, Inc., a Portland planning, design and engineering firm. The analysis focused on engineering feasibility, land use, site development costs, agency approvals and other related issues.

Other members of the coalition added their voices to Bailey's.

"The threat of a Warm Springs casino near Hood River is an empty threat and cannot be used to justify a casino resort in Cascade Locks. This report proves that a Hood River casino is impossible from an environmental, engineering, political and legal standpoint," said Coalition member Michael Lang, with Friends of the Columbia Gorge. "A massive casino anywhere in the Columbia River Gorge is either impossible or unpopular," said Coalition member Bill Perry of the Oregon Restaurant Association. "A far better approach is an on-reservation casino in Central Oregon."

Coalition leaders are urging state and federal elected officials to reject a Gorge casino and immediately begin negotiations with the Warm Springs Tribe to develop a new casino, on reservation lands, in Central Oregon. Central Oregon is one of the fastest growing areas in the nation. The Grand Ronde Tribe has offered to finance a new Warm Springs casino if it is located on Warm Springs' Central Oregon Reservation.

"It's not true that Cascade Locks or Hood River is the only choices," said Bill Perry, Director of Public Affairs for the Oregon Restaurant Association. "Legitimate options have never been discussed," he said. He referred to

planting the casino on Warm Springs land along Route 26, for example.

"An on reservation casino in Central Oregon protects the Gorge environment, protects Oregon from off-reservation casinos and provides all Oregon tribes with a fair casino policy instead of more delays," said Rob Greene, Tribal Attorney for the Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde.

Nick Graham, with the Oregon Family Council said, "As an organization we strongly oppose gambling, but we respect the laws that allow Native Americans the right to operate casinos. We believe that Tribal casinos should be located on reservation lands and urge Oregon's elected officials to work together to keep casinos out of the Gorge."

The Coalition also released a television ad that will run for several

weeks.

The Spirit Mountain Casino's revenues play an undeniably important role in the current discussion. A Grand Ronde-funded study last year found that a casino in Cascade Locks could have a drastic impact on Spirit Mountain's business.

"Economics is important," said Greene. "But policy and history are also critical to this issue. Grand Ronde relied on the State's policy of one on reservation casino per Tribe, and Grand Ronde invested heavily in Spirit Mountain based on that policy." And as for history, said Greene, descendants of the Native people who lived at Cascade Locks are part of the Grand Ronde Community today, and

See REPORT
on page 3

Tribal Chair Visits Korea



Photo courtesy of Chris Mercier

"Holding On To Dear Life" — Tribal Chair Chris Mercier feels empowered by the two fresh ginseng plants he uprooted from Korean soil. Geumsan province is a world famous producer of ginseng, also called "The Root of Life," due to legendary health benefits. SEE STORY ON PAGE 8.



Confederated Tribes of the Grand Ronde
Community of Oregon
9615 Grand Ronde Road
Grand Ronde, Oregon 97347

PRESORTED
FIRST-CLASS MAIL
U.S. POSTAGE PAID
SALEM, OR
PERMIT NO. 178

OR NEWSPAPER PROJ. LIBRARY SYSTEM PRESERV.
1299 UNIVERSITY OF OREGON
EUGENE OR 97403-1205