

The Tribe will remain vigilant

DECISION continued from front page

Stacia Martin also attended. Represented by attorney Lawrence Robbins, the Grand Ronde Tribe argued that the Cowlitz was not a recognized Tribe under federal jurisdiction when the Indian Reorganization Act was passed in 1934 and did not meet the initial reservation exception under the Indian Gaming Regulatory Act, among other arguments.

Robbins said during the appeal hearing that for the Department of the Interior to take land into trust for the Cowlitz Tribe under the Indian Reorganization Act, Interior Secretary Sally Jewell had to make two independent decisions: That the Cowlitz Tribe was a recognized Tribe and that the Cowlitz were under federal jurisdiction.

The decision, written by Wilkins, affirmed Rothstein's decision.

"The Secretary (of the Interior) reasonably interpreted and applied the Indian Reorganization Act to conclude that the Cowlitz are a 'recognized Indian Tribe now under federal jurisdiction,'" Wilkins wrote in his opinion. "The Secretary also reasonably determined that the Cowlitz meet the 'initial-reservation' exception to the Indian Gaming Regulatory Act."

Grand Ronde Tribal Council Chairman Reyn Leno released a statement shortly after the Court



Photo by Michelle Alaimo

The Cowlitz Indian Tribe's casino, Ilani Casino Resort, is under construction overlooking Interstate 5 near La Center, Wash. The Grand Ronde Tribe is planning to appeal a U.S. Court of Appeals ruling on Friday, July 29, that will allow the Cowlitz Tribe to keep its 152-acre Reservation and continue building a casino 15 miles north of the Portland-Vancouver metropolitan area.

of Appeals decision was released. "The Tribe continues to believe it is wrong for the Cowlitz to build a casino in Clark County, a region historically belonging to the Tribes and Bands of the Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde," Leno said. "We are reviewing the decision and are evaluating our next steps. Our Tribe has remained vigilant throughout this process and will continue to be."

"The Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde doesn't believe that a Tribe should be allowed to go reservation shopping outside their historic territory, simply because they have identified a location that is more desirable because of its proximity to an urban area. We look

forward to keeping our membership informed and are determined to forge ahead in a positive manner.

"In addition to how we respond to this decision, the Tribe has initiated a major renovation of

Spirit Mountain Casino, is redeveloping the greyhound track at Wood Village and continues to explore options to build the Grand Ronde economy."

Tribal Council scheduled an executive session to discuss the ruling on Monday, Aug. 1.

The Grand Ronde Tribe has consistently stated that the Cowlitz Tribe's traditional homelands are about 60 miles farther north in the Toledo, Wash., area. Tribal officials have previously stated that if the Cowlitz had received a reservation in that area, the Grand Ronde Tribe would never have filed a lawsuit.

The city of Vancouver withdrew from the lawsuit following oral arguments heard in March.

The Supreme Court, unlike the Court of Appeals, is not required to take all cases. If the Supreme Court does not take the case, the decision of the Court of Appeals stands. ■

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- Camping will be allowed beginning Wednesday, Aug. 17, at 8 a.m.
- Propane BBQ permitted
- Self-contained propane fires and BBQs only
- Only certified service dogs permitted
- Drugs and alcohol are not allowed on Tribal property and will be enforced

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