

April 25, 2008

Robert Edwards, Chairman
Indians of Enterprise No.1
5835 Golden Oaks Road
Paradise, CA 95969

Amy Dutschke, Acting Regional Director
Pacific Region, Bureau of Indian Affairs
2800 Cottage Way, Room W-2820
Sacramento, CA 95825

**RE: "Draft EIS Comments, Enterprise Rancheria,
Proposed Fee-To-Trust Casino/Hotel Project"**

Dear Regional Director Dutschke:

There are established criteria that are not being met in the case of the Enterprise Rancheria proposed fee-to-trust casino/hotel project. For example, this project does not involve trust land, nor does it meet *any* of the requirements set forth as exemptions listed under the Indian Gaming Regulatory Act, (IGRA).

The land at this project site in Yuba County has not been taken into trust as settlement of a land claim, nor is the land a restoration of lands for a Tribe which has been restored to Federal Recognition as required. Therefore the Bureau of Indian Affairs and the "Tribe" are in fact putting the cart before the horse in a joint effort that is leading many to believe that the land is already in trust and the "process" is just a formality. That is most certainly not the case.

In 2005 this casino project was an issue put on the ballot as "Measure G" for the consideration and vote of the citizens of Yuba County. *Yuba County voters rejected this project by a margin of 52.1 percent to 47.9 percent.* Under the Governor's current standards in California, in order for the tribe to obtain a Gaming Compact they must have the support of the local community. According to the vote, that support is not there and therefore this project fails to meet not only Federal criteria, but State criteria as well.

Most recently, as reported in the Appeal-Democrat (article attached) on April 22, 2008, lack of adequate wastewater treatment and increased traffic are two major concerns being voiced by Yuba County officials. For any of us who have attempted to drive through

downtown Marysville after 3:00 p.m. those concerns are valid as traffic is and has been a very real issue for many years. A hotel-casino would certainly contribute immensely to this already existing problem.

The ongoing problems within the Enterprise Rancheria Tribe have been well documented by the media over a period of almost five years. Those problems, including the disenrollment of 72 of their tribal members; documented Civil Rights and Human Rights violations; an ongoing F.B.I. investigation; and the questionable handling of the tribe's Human Services Fund by members of their own tribal government, are just a few of the problems that have crossed many desks, including yours, at the Bureau of Indian Affairs, Pacific Regional Office and at your Central California Agency in Sacramento as well.

I find it disturbing that the Bureau's policies allow your officials to assist this Tribe in obtaining this casino project at great personal expense to the taxpayers, yet not one dime or ounce of effort has been spent by the Bureau to find a solution for the thousands of Indians victimized in this state by these corrupt tribal governments.

That victimization continues at both the hands of the Bureau and the hands of tribal governments when 92% of the Indians in California will receive *absolutely* no benefit from gaming. In thousands of cases Indians are being systematically separated from their tribes by acts of disenrollment and moratoriums on membership for the sole purpose of sharing gaming monies among fewer Indians.

As reported in the Sacramento Bee, in other cases, Bureau officials have actually been exposed for swelling tribal membership in tribes with a planned casino project in order to have the Bureau official's family benefit personally from gaming dollars. As also reported by the Sacramento Bee, two Bureau Officials in Sacramento, still employed by the Bureau, were investigated for inappropriately meeting with casino investors. I think the conflict of interest in these cases is very clear.

As things stand right now the Bureau will continue to concentrate their efforts and taxpayer monies on the 8% of the Indians in California whose lives have already benefited from gaming. Inexcusably, the Bureau ignores real issues affecting the lives of the remaining 92%.

Sincerely,

Robert Edwards

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