

## Frequently Asked Questions About the Casino

**Q:** *What is the Warm Springs Proposal?*

**A:** To locate a gaming and destination resort facility in an industrial park in Cascade Locks instead of on scenic tribal trust land near Hood River. The project will provide economic self sufficiency to tribal members in desperate need. A gaming compact with the state will assure perpetual protection for pristine Hood River/Columbia Gorge lands, 1400 full-time jobs and revenue sharing of 17% of casino profits with all Oregonians. It will also jump start the tourism-based economy of the entire Gorge which has been plagued with high unemployment for decades.

**Q:** *How long has the tribe been working on this?*

**A:** Since 1998. That year, a tribal referendum supported moving gaming operations from Kah- Nee-Ta to tribal lands in Hood River County. Cascade Locks and Hood River Commission passed resolutions supporting gaming in Cascade Locks rather than Hood River. Tribe began negotiating a Memorandum of Agreement and land sale/lease agreements. In March 2004, Warm Springs agreed to protect/convey their Hood River Lands and formally requested that new compact negotiations begin with Governor Kulongoski and State negotiating team for Cascade Locks site. April 6, 2005 the tribe and Governor Kulongoski signed new compact for Cascade Locks casino.

**Q:** *Why is this site better than other sites?*

**A:** Because the ancestors of the Warm Springs people have lived along the Columbia River for 10,000 years, the Warm Springs are entitled to build their casino on environmentally sensitive tribal lands near Hood River, held in tribal trust before 1988 [the “trigger date” for the Indian Gaming Regulatory Act]. However, the tribe and state have agreed that building the casino in an industrial park within the City of Cascade Locks – where the local community wants it built – is a wise compromise. The Warm Springs have long standing, legal and cultural ties to Cascade Locks which have been protected in treaties and congressional acts. The Cascade Locks site is not in the National Scenic Area. It is in a special urban area designated by Congress for economic development. The Cascade Locks site is not scenic or environmentally sensitive. The Hood River site is both.

**Q:** *But wouldn't a casino at this site be the first “off-reservation” casino in Oregon?*

**A:** **No. It is a little known fact that many of the Federally-recognized Oregon tribes have built their casinos on land they added to their reservation for purposes of gaming.** These “restored tribes” – including the **Grand Ronde** [Spirit Mountain Casino], the **Coos/Lower Umpqua/Siuslaw** [Three Rivers Casino – Florence], the **Coquille** [The Old Mill Casino – North Bend] and the **Siletz** [Lincoln City – about 50 miles from their reservation] – used special Congressional Acts or federal laws to acquire the specific new land parcels for their casinos. Similarly, the Warm Springs are proposing to use Section 20 of the Indian Gaming Regulatory Act to bring 35 acres in

Cascade Locks into trust for the purpose of a gaming facility. This would actually be the 7<sup>th</sup> “off-reservation” casino in Oregon.

**Q:** *Who would benefit from the casino?*

**A:** In economic terms, just about everyone would benefit. During the first ten years of casino operations, the Warm Springs would earn about \$30 million annually [after paying off construction and project financing costs], allowing them to address severe economic conditions on the reservation [over 50% unemployment] and pay for healthcare, education and public safety services.

Construction workers and related trades would benefit – it will take about 1.7 million hours of work to build the casino – that’s over 400 jobs and a payroll of over \$50 million.

Employees seeking to work in the tourism and hospitality industry would benefit – about 1400 full-time family/living wage jobs will be available at the casino and resort, generating an annual payroll of \$25 million. For the first time in an Oregon casino, workers will have the right to join a union of their choosing. Experts in the industry expect the casino to generate additional tourism jobs in neighboring communities.

The City and Port of Cascade Locks would benefit – instead of requiring tax breaks to woo a large employer, the local governments will reap significant revenues when the casino locates there. The casino will pay local government property tax assessments, utility fees, road maintenance and public works charges, hotel/motel taxes, fund a new fire/ambulance station and pay the wages for police, fire and ambulance personnel. Additionally, the casino will pay a premium to buy and lease Port land and spend about \$20 million to build a new freeway interchange that will open access to the community’s industrial park.

All Oregonians would benefit from the expenditures of the revenue sharing fund to be known as the “Warm Springs Tribes--Oregon Benefit Fund” -- a tax-exempt non-profit foundation set up by the Tribes will distribute monies primarily for scholarships for Oregon students attending Oregon colleges/universities. Some foundation funds will pay for Columbia River Gorge Scenic Area enhancements and some funds will pay for projects in economically-distressed areas of the state. **It is projected that during the first 10 years of casino operation, the foundation will receive \$270 million.**

**Q.** *What about the environment in the Columbia River Gorge Scenic Area?*

**A.** Building a casino at this compromise location will provide numerous environmental benefits. Environmentally sensitive tribal lands [about 40 acres] will be perpetually protected from development. Additionally, Hood River Lands acquired by the Warm Springs [about 175 acres] will be perpetually protected as a conservation area and conveyed to the State. And disputed land claims will be settled, preserving popular public roadways and the Hatfield State Park Trailhead in the Columbia River Gorge Scenic Area.

The casino will be located in the Cascade Locks Industrial Park, according to Oregon’s stringent statewide land use laws and the Columbia River Gorge Scenic Area Act.

The Warm Springs have a history of environmental protection and preservation that has been incorporated in the Compact, for example: standards for facility design use of “green” building techniques/materials and energy efficient technologies will assure sustainable operations; an innovative Traffic Management Plan will anticipate and minimize environmental impacts.

Profits from the gaming operations will be used to protect salmon and restore sensitive habitat along the Columbia River. The Warm Springs have a demonstrated history of environmental action because of their core spiritual beliefs and connections with the Creator.

Special provisions regarding the membership of the Community Benefit Fund [financed with 6% of casino profits] will assure that representatives of environmental groups participate in selecting projects to fund.

Additionally, up to 10% of the revenue sharing funds will be spent on projects which protect and enhance the Columbia River Gorge Scenic Area. **That means about \$27 million will be available, during the first ten years of casino operations.**

The Warm Springs will undergo an Environmental Impact Statement process to assure public participation in the identification and mitigation of all project impacts from the gaming development.

**Q.** *Won't this casino hurt small businesses like restaurants, bars, taverns and adult clubs because of "increased labor and pricing competition", eventually harming Oregon Lottery retailers?*

**A.** **No. There are 908 lottery retailers in the Tri-County area who have brought 4,540 video terminals into neighborhoods for the purpose of convenience gambling. Slot machines will soon be added in many locations. The revenues from these businesses have continued to grow and fuel the growth in lottery proceeds to the state, even as highly profitable Indian Casinos such as Spirit Mountain have expanded their size and revenues.**

These lottery retailers -- who have fought against sharing much of their take with the state -- appeal to a different market than the customers who travel to an Indian Casino, according to well-documented studies conducted by the prestigious consulting firm, EcoNorthwest. Additionally, the owners of these establishments and their lobbyists have a long history of fighting against increases in minimum wages and benefits for their employees that has nothing to do with the existence or location of Indian Casinos.

**Q.** *Wouldn't this proposal result in more casinos being built in Oregon and "open the floodgates" to more casinos in the Portland area?*

**A.** **No.** There are currently 9 Indian casinos in Oregon. When the Warm Springs close their Kah-Nee-Ta casino and move it to Cascade Locks, there will still only be 9 Indian

Casinos. Governor Kulongoski preserved the “one casino” per tribe rule in the compact for the Cascade Locks casino. There will be no increase and no “proliferation.” Governor Kulongoski rightly approved this project because of the Warm Springs unique circumstances in their historic homeland, the Columbia River Gorge. No other Tribe can replicate these unique circumstances. They own gaming eligible pre-1988 trust property in Hood River. Cascade Locks was their home for thousands of years before the western migration of 1843, and they were moved to a reservation high desert land they knew little about in 1855 for reasons of survival, before Oregon was a State.

We don't know of any other tribe in Oregon that comes close to these circumstances. This is one of a kind. Assertions that this ‘opens the door to urban casinos’ is hype and knowing misrepresentation by economic competitors seeking greater market share in the Portland Gaming market and trying desperately to keep the Warm Springs out of that market.

**Q.** *Who are the people who are fighting the casino? Isn't there a broad “coalition” of groups who are **opposed** to it?*

**A. No.** Dan Lavey recently wrote a letter to the editor of the *Oregonian* concerning the casino project “because he cares about Oregon's future.” He claimed to speak for this coalition. Actually, Lavey is a paid political consultant who is conducting one of the slickest, best financed, and most deceptive ad campaigns in Oregon's history. This ad program is so dishonest that the *Oregonian* published an editorial concluding that this “coalition” should be ashamed of itself. That editorial is available on this website at a separate link. Lavey is paid to produce misleading ads and push polls. His interest is in getting paid, not the environmental sanctity of the Gorge or the future of Oregon. His poll suggesting that 60% of all Oregonians oppose the casino was a “push poll” with loaded questions like: “*agree/disagree: Oregon doesn't need another casino.*” There won't be more casinos if the Warm Springs move an existing casino to Cascade Locks. How does this, and similar questions in Mr. Lavey's “survey,” help us understand how Oregonians feel about what is really proposed? It doesn't! Their 60% poll number is dishonest.

Just who is in Lavey's coalition? It's the **Oregon Restaurant Association** whose membership includes the bars, taverns and strip joints that provide 4,900 gambling machines in neighborhoods throughout the Portland metro area. Just follow the money to understand why they might be opposed to competition in Cascade Locks.

It's the **Confederated Tribes of the Grand Ronde** who is paying for the deceptive ads with the revenue produced at their hugely profitable Spirit Mountain casino. Do they care about the future of poor families in Columbia River communities or the impoverished conditions on the Warm Springs reservation? Probably not as much as they care about preventing competition in Cascade Locks.

It's the **Friends of the Gorge** (FOG) who seeks to prevent communities like Cascade Locks from developing their own industrial land and using clean tourism as a means to raise its standard of living. Do they actually believe that anyone is more environmentally sensitive than the people who have lived in complete harmony with the river for more than 10,000 years? Come on FOG, you could learn a few things from the Warm Springs. The environmental issues in the Gorge began long after the Warm Springs were forcibly removed to their reservation in Central Oregon. We should all welcome the Tribes back to their ancestral home.

It's the **Oregon Family Council** who wants to improve quality of life for all families, just as long as the families don't live on the Warm Springs Reservation or in Cascade Locks. They care about family values, but only for folks who believe just like they do.

People who care deeply about the Gorge, and who live here, also care deeply about the future of Oregon and our region. A majority of these people support the casino project. We care about the quality of life for families throughout the Gorge and believe that it will be enhanced by the 1,400 permanent jobs that will be added once the Casino opens. We care about the hundreds of families that will get jobs from the construction of the casino in a region with chronic unemployment. We care about the seniors and children among the Warm Springs and residents of Cascade Locks who will finally get basic health care and education if this project is approved. We care about the thousands of high school students throughout our State will have a little easier time going to an Oregon college or University because of this project. We want to preserve the trust property east of Hood River and protect the Mark O. Hatfield interpretive center and the Mosier Twin Tunnels. We don't want to see dirty industry or undisciplined development in the heart of the Gorge.

If Mr. Lavey's poll had questioned Oregonians about these values, we believe they would agree with the strong majority in the Gorge who support this project. That's why 31 federal, state, and local elected officials from throughout the Gorge sent Secretary Norton a letter strongly disagreeing with Congressman Wu's opposition letter. This letter was signed by Congressmen, County Commissioners, Mayors, Council Members, and Port Commissioners from every part of the Gorge. Elected officials from communities on both sides of the Columbia River support the Warm Springs Casino at Cascade Locks because they understand the project and they share these same values. This letter and a list of all of these elected officials are available on this web site.

**Q.** *Who are the people supporting the casino? Is there a broad coalition **supporting** the project?*

**A.** **Yes**, the support for the casino in Cascade Locks is very strong throughout the Gorge on both sides of the river. All of the surveys taken by the City support this statement. Our letters of support provide further documentation. The following elected officials have all endorsed the project:

1. Governor Ted Kulongoski

2. Congressman Greg Walden
3. State Representative Patti Smith
4. State Representative John Dallum
5. State Representative Tom Butler
6. State Senator Ted Ferrioli
7. State Senator Rick Metsger
8. State Senator Ben Westlund
9. Rodger Schock, Chair Hood River County Commission
10. Carol York, Hood River County Commissioner
11. Chuck Thomsen, Hood River County Commissioner
12. Les Perkins, Hood River County Commissioner
13. Maui Meyer, Hood River County Commissioner
14. Dan Ericksen, Wasco County Judge
15. Scott McKay, Wasco County Commissioner
16. Sherry Holliday, Wasco County Commissioner
17. Lonnie Roberts, Multnomah County Commissioner
18. Gary Thompson, Sherman County Judge
19. Sherry Kaseberg, Sherman County Commissioner
20. Al McKee, Chair Skamania County Commission
21. Paul Pearce, Skamania County Commissioner
22. Jim Richardson, Skamania County Commissioner
23. Jeanne Burch, Wheeler County Judge
24. John Asher, Wheeler County Commissioner
25. Rob Van Cleave, Mayor, The Dalles
26. John Kirk, Mayor, North Bonneville WA
27. Ralph Hesgard, Mayor, Cascade Locks
28. Lee Kitchens, Cascade Locks City Councilor
29. Cindy Mitchell, Cascade Locks City Councilor
30. Arni Kononen, Cascade Locks City Councilor
31. Kerry Osbourn, Cascade Locks City Councilor
32. Rob Brostoff, Cascade Locks City Commissioner
33. Kathy Woosley, President, Port of Cascade Locks
34. Joeinne Caldwell, Port of Cascade Locks Commissioner
35. Tim Lee, Port of Cascade Locks Commissioner
36. Scot Sullenger, Port of Cascade Locks Commissioner
37. Jean McLean, Port of Cascade Locks Commissioner
38. Tom Payton, City Council Member, North Bonneville, WA
39. Amy Lyddon, City Council Member, North Bonneville, WA
40. Kathleen Malone, Hood River School Board Member
41. Monica Masco, City Council Member, Stevenson, WA
42. Paul Thalhofer, Mayor, City of Troutdale, OR
43. Paul Cummings, Councilor and Former Mayor, Hood River, OR
44. Monica Masco, Council Member, Stevenson, WA

**Q.** *Aren't the Warm Springs bluffing about building on their Hood River site? Do they really have a legal right to build in the scenic area?*

**A. The Warm Springs are not bluffing.** On May 21, 2002, the people of the Warm Springs Reservation voted by a margin of 76% to 24% to expand Tribal gaming operations to a site in the Columbia River Gorge. This was a very strong mandate for the Tribal Council to move forward on a new casino in Hood River County. The turnout for this election was very high. There are the only two sites in Hood River County that are available to them: either Cascade Locks or the Tribes trust property east of Hood River. If the casino is not approved in Cascade Locks, it will be built on the only other site available to them.

Kevin Gorman, the executive director of the Friends of the Gorge (FOG), has expressed an opinion in several newspapers in the region that he believes the Tribes are “bluffing” and have no legal right to build on the Hood River site. On the other hand, you have Governor Ted Kulongoski who has stated publicly that it is his opinion that they do have a legal right to build in Hood River and they will build in the Scenic Area if the Cascade Locks site is not approved. Mr. Gorman’s background is in marketing. He is not a member of the Oregon State Bar. The Governor is a former Attorney General and former member of the Oregon Supreme Court. When he was an assistant AG, the Governor negotiated compacts with Oregon Tribes. He is familiar with Indian gaming laws. Upon whose legal opinion should Oregon base its future and the future of the Gorge? Which opinion is more credible?

Rodger Schock, Chair of the Hood River County Commissioners, makes this argument very eloquently and effectively in the “Another Voice” section of the *Hood River News* in the June 25, 2005 edition. He argues that it is Mr. Gorman and the FOG who are bluffing. He applauds Governor Kulongoski for having the courage to do the right thing. It is his opinion that we will see an Indian casino on the bluff in the National Scenic Area above Hood River if it is not approved in Cascade Locks. A copy of Commissioner Schock’s opinion is available on this website on a separate link.

**Q.** *Is the City of Cascade Locks losing jobs from other companies while they are chasing the casino “pipedream?”*

**A. The Port of Cascade Locks has not turned down or chased away any jobs because of its interest in the casino project.** The Friends of the Gorge (FOG) and other casino opponents cite Greenhill Lumber and Homeshield as examples of “lost jobs” in Cascade Locks. Greenhill Lumber recently terminated its month-to-month lease with the Port and moved to The Dalles. As the casino opponents know, the Port converted Greenhill’s long term lease to a month-to-month arrangement in 1994, over 10 years ago. The specific reasons for this action were reported on page B15 of the Oregonian, Wednesday, January 12, 1994 and need not be recited here. This was 6 years before the casino project was even proposed in Cascade Locks. Since 1994, Greenhill has been on a month-to-month lease. In October, 2002, and please note that this is prior to the election of Ted Kulongoski as Oregon Governor, the Port exercised its right to terminate Greenhill’s month-to-month lease to allow room for Bear Mountain Forest Products to expand their operation. Bear Mountain has been utilizing space at the Old Stevenson Co-Plywood

Plant and needed additional storage. During the decade that Greenhill operated in Cascade Locks, their operations and employment numbers were not demonstrating much growth and many of their employees lived in The Dalles. During the same decade, Bear Mountain was experiencing steady growth and was clearly having an impact on the local economy. Recently, most of the area containing Greenhill's operation has been incorporated into Bear Mountain's leasehold for reasons that had nothing to do with the casino.

Interestingly, in 1988, Greenhill Lumber was forced to relocate its operation from the historic mill town of Bridal Veil, Oregon as the Friends of the Gorge engineered the purchase of Greenhill's leasehold by the Trust for Public Land. In addition to Greenhill, residents of Bridal Veil were forced to relocate. Bridal Veil had existed as a mill town for decades, with a church and a few families. The Friends had no concern or compassion about the impact that closing down a small community would have on individual lives and families. FOG is showing the same lack of concern for the people of Cascade Locks today. Greenhill Lumber might still be successfully operating in Bridal Veil had not the Friends forcibly erased their property rights. Given their actions in Bridal Veil, the Friends arguing that the Port isn't doing enough industrial recruitment for Cascade Locks, like a lot of their casino arguments, rings hollow.

The Port of Cascade Locks Industrial Park was never seriously considered as a location for Homeshield. Homeshield recently relocated from Hood River to The Dalles. At the time, their primary consideration for finding a new home was convenience for their existing work force. No Homeshield employees live in Cascade Locks. Most of them live in Hood River and The Dalles. In addition, The Dalles can utilize a specifically directed training program offered by Columbia Gorge Community College. The problems with industrial recruitment in Cascade Locks include a lack of a college campus in town, limited housing stock, potential closing of our high school, lack of industrial support facilities, competition from adjacent communities, lack of natural gas, and lack of adequate access to the interstate system. The FOG and other opponents know all these facts, and yet they continue to cite both of these companies as "lost jobs" for Cascade Locks. The Greenhill Lumber decision created new jobs for people living in town. The Homeshield relocation was never a decision for us to make. They never seriously considered Cascade Locks and did not ever contact the Port of Cascade Locks about available land.

*(This document, and other information about the Cascade Locks casino, can be found on the City's website: [www.clbb.net](http://www.clbb.net))*