



CNIGA

California Nations
Indian Gaming Association

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Torres Martinez Compact

New Deal Generates Praise, Concerns

California tribal governments expressed unanimous support for the successful efforts by the Torres Martinez Band of Desert Cahuilla Indians to enter into a tribal-state compact enabling the tribe to launch government gaming operations in Imperial and Riverside counties. The agreement, signed Aug. 13 by tribal officials and Davis, was the first new compact agreed to by the state in 3½ years.

But the ink was not yet dry on the agreement when some tribal leaders raised concerns that revenue sharing and other components of the Torres Martinez deal strayed too far from compacts agreed to in 1999 by 61 tribes. Tribal attorneys warned that the state could seek similar concessions in new compacts and those subject to renegotiation.

"It's terribly unfortunate that the state wouldn't give to the Torres Martinez what it gave to 61 other tribes," tribal consultant Michael Lombardi told *The Desert Sun*.

State officials and Torres Martinez tribal leaders stressed that the compact would not serve as a model for other California tribes.

"Each tribe is sovereign," Barry Goode, Davis' legal affairs secretary, told *The*

Sacramento Bee. "We want to look at each tribe and see what makes sense for each tribe."

The nearly 600 members of the largely impoverished Southern California tribe hope to develop two government gaming operations: a 350-slot machine truck stop on its existing reservation in Imperial County and a 1,650-machine resort hotel and casino on tribal land in Riverside County.

"Our tribe has suffered for years, but finally we have a chance to make our situation better," tribal Chairman Raymond Torres told *The Bee*. "We are very excited."

What troubles some tribes is the fact the compact requires Torres Martinez to pay 3 to 5 percent of the net win from the 350-machine casino into the state's general revenue fund, an apparent violation of the Indian Gaming Regulatory Act of 1988, which prohibits taxation of tribal gaming revenue. Davis has said he wants some \$680 million of tribal revenues to help alleviate a \$38 billion budget deficit.

Compacted gaming tribes currently pay a percent of gaming revenues into two funds; a

Torres Martinez: continued on page 2

Growth In Tribal Employment Nears 20%

California tribal government employment grew by 17.8 percent for the year ending July 2003, far surpassing all other private or public sector employers in the state, California Employment Development Department figures show.

Tribal employment grew by 2.5 percent in July, according to EDD figures, a month which saw the state lose 21,800 jobs, sending the payroll statewide to its

lowest level since the job market began sliding more than two years ago.

With the exception of tribal governments, virtually every sector posted losses, including retailing, transportation, manufacturing and business services.

Tribal governments employ 40,300 workers, according to the EDD, a figure that has risen dramatically since tribal-state gaming compacts were approved in 1999.

About 90 percent of the workers are non-Indians.

Much of the growth in employment is attributed to the evolution of tribal government gaming operations from stand-alone casinos to resorts with hotels and other amenities.

Employment figures can be obtained at: [http://www.calmis.ca.gov/file/1fmonth/cal\\$pr.txt](http://www.calmis.ca.gov/file/1fmonth/cal$pr.txt).

Torres Martinez: *continued from page 1*

Special Distribution Fund to reimburse state and local governments for the impact of gaming on Indian lands, and a Revenue Sharing Trust Fund from which non-gaming tribes and those with fewer than 350 machines share statewide gaming revenues. But tribes make no payments to the state general revenue fund.

The Torres Martinez compact also requires the tribe to negotiate agreements with Riverside and Imperial counties and the city of Coachella before beginning construction on the two gaming operations. This, too, is a departure from existing compacts that some tribal leaders believe is a serious infringement on Torres Martinez's rights as a sovereign nation.

"This is a radical change from the existing compacts," San Rafael attorney George Forman said of the agreement. "The fact that Torres Martinez will have to enter into enforceable binding agreements with local jurisdictions means it will likely assume additional financial burdens.

"And there is no relationship between payments to the state's general fund and either gaming related impacts to the state or

any specific state service to the tribe," Forman said. "This may prove to be an issue for the U.S. Secretary of the Interior," a federal government agency which as trustee for Indian tribes has the authority to approve or reject the agreement.

The larger casino Torres Martinez hopes to build will be located on land the federal government gave to the tribe in 2000 in exchange for ancestral lands flooded by the Salton Sea between 1905 and 1907. Federal legislation calling for the land swap requires the tribe to seek local approval for any gaming operations.

"There is no explanation," Forman said, for the tribe's need to get approval from Imperial County for the 350-machine truck stop.

"There could be happier things," tribal Chairman Raymond Torres said of the concessions, "but this is the first step in the right direction." He said the tribe learned early on in negotiations with the state that it would have to pay revenues to the general revenue fund.

Similar provisions requiring tribes make payments to the state general

revenue fund and cede jurisdiction over tribal lands to state and municipal governments "are likely to show up in every other new or renegotiated compact," Forman said.

More than 30 California tribes are seeking new compacts. In addition, compacted tribes seeking more than 2,000 slot machines and those that have outstanding environmental issues are required to renegotiate with the state those elements of their compacts.

Non-compacted tribes were briefed on the Torres Martinez agreement Aug. 20 in Sacramento in the latest of a series of meetings arranged by the California Nations Indian Gaming association. More than 60 tribal leaders and representatives attended the session.

The tribes were pleased to learn the Torres Martinez compact did not include a cap of 2,000 machines and eliminated gaming licenses. It did, however, include a provision that either party may request renegotiations every four year and raised the minimum age for gamblers from 18 to 21.

Legal Update: Lawsuits Challenging Tribal Recognition

LYTTON:

Artichoke Joe's II: On August 6, 2003, Judge David Levi of the U.S. District Court, Eastern District of California, refused to grant an injunction to stop Lytton's Casino San Pablo fee to trust conveyance. *He also refused, however, to dismiss the portion of the case by which Artichoke Joe's challenges Lytton's status as a federally recognized tribe.* Artichoke Joe's bases this attack on its theory that Rancherias are *nothing more than homeless shelters* and that the United States cannot recognize the Indian people occupying them as tribes unless they meet the standards of the BAR acknowledgment regulations (continuous historical and political existence, etc.). Judge Levi found that the United States had not clearly articulated its policy on the re-recognition of tribes that had been terminated and then restored by litigation, such as Scott's Valley, Tillie Hardwick and many others. He invited the United States to clarify that position in another motion. In particular, he asked "whether the United States recognized

Lytton under the IRA or whether the Secretary made a recognition decision that was political in the sense that it was independent of any regulation or standard." Like many Rancherias, Lytton is *not* an IRA tribe. Artichoke Joe's has appealed the denial of an injunction to the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals.

Scott's Valley v. United States: After losing their injunction motion, Artichoke Joe's filed a motion to intervene in the long-resolved Scott's Valley case, through which Lytton was restored in 1991. That motion is to be heard on October 23, 2003. This case has the potential of starting an avalanche of attempts by enemies of tribes to *re-terminate* restored tribes. Artichoke Joe's is asking the judge to reopen this old case, and to *interpret the stipulation to require that Lytton organize under the IRA as a precondition of its federal recognition, and to find that Lytton is not entitled to organize under the IRA.*

SHINGLE SPRINGS:

El Dorado County v. Norton: El Dorado County is asking Judge Burrell of the US District Court of the Eastern District of California to terminate Shingle Springs, and the County is using the Artichoke Joe's "homeless shelter" theory. Shingle Springs was never terminated. The County wants the judge to examine the history of the Tribe going back to the 1920's when the Rancheria was established. It claims that the Tribe cannot meet the BAR standards and that it therefore its recognition must be terminated. This case broadens the attack against Rancherias to include those that were never terminated.

BOTH OF THESE CASES REPRESENT A NEW WAIVE OF ANTI-TRIBAL SOVEREIGNTY LEGAL ATTACKS. CONGRESSIONAL ACTION MAY BE REQUIRED TO PROTECT CALIFORNIA'S RANCHERIAS FROM THIS ASSAULT.

Jake Speaks

Tribal gaming needs the same federal protections as other trust resources

By JACOB COIN

My strong commitment to tribal self-governance and self-determination began as a very young man. And I expressed that belief when members of the Hopi Tribe of Arizona met one day in the mid-1980s to discuss the federal government's growing willingness to contract directly with tribes in the management of trust services and tribal resources.

"We should consider this," I said.

A tribal elder stood up.

"Be careful," the wise old man said.

"Just like the old people predicted, the federal government has grown tired of the Indian. We've become a burden on them and the federal government wants nothing more than to be rid of the Indian and the promises made to us. But the white man should never be relieved of his treaty and trust obligations to Indian tribes and Indian people.

"The white man took more Indians lives and more Indian land, water, minerals and other resources than he could ever repay."

I remember those words, to this day. The U.S. Government has for more than a century maintained a trust relationship with Native Americans in the management of land, gas, oil and other tribal resources.

Granted, I use the term "management" loosely. The Department of the Interior has been criminal in its bungling of lease payments owed to Indians since Interior began managing tribal land resources in 1887.

Regardless, that has been the legal landscape in this country. Interior and the Bureau of Indian Affairs, on behalf of the entire federal government, have served as trustees of these valuable resources; agents in a government-to-government relationship with the tribes.

In this era of self-determination in Indian affairs, it is extremely important that the federal government understands that the policy of self-determination does not mean an abdication of treaty and trust

commitments to the tribes. It is important that the policy of self-determination be encouraged among the tribes, but not be allowed to cross over into yet another era of termination.



That is especially true when it comes to tribal government gaming and the myth of the rich Indian; the growing misconception among politicians and the public that it is no longer necessary that the federal government provide trust services to this country's Native Americans, many of whom still live in poverty.

CASINO REVENUES ARE TRUST RESOURCES

Government revenues from casinos on Indian lands are as much tribal trust resources as land, oil and gas, timber and other minerals. They, too, are the by-products of a trust relationship between *Federal Protections: continued page 5*

Legislative Report

By DAVID QUINTANA

The California Gambling Control Commission (CGCC) suffered one more blow this week as a legislative body supported CNIGA's request that their handling of the Revenue Sharing Trust Fund (RSTF) has been poor and cost the non-gaming tribes millions of dollars.

After months of prodding from CNIGA leadership and members, the Joint Legislative Audit Committee of the state Legislature on Tuesday voted unanimously to seek an audit of the RSTF and the CGCC management of the fund.

CNIGA last October called for an audit and investigation of the commission's handling of the fund, claiming checks were being delayed and in some cases mailed to tribes that were not eligible to receive funds. The CNIGA request was brought to the committee by Sen. Jim Battin, R-Palm

Desert, and Sen. Jim Brulte, R-Rancho Cucamonga.

"It is clear the commission went far beyond the scope of its fiduciary responsibility as set down in tribal-state compacts and, in doing so, interfered with the government-to-government relationship between the tribes and the state," says CNIGA Chairwoman Brenda Soulliere.

The joint audit committee rejected arguments from CGCC General Counsel Pete Melnicoe that the review of fund management was unnecessary because the agency had already contacted with an outside agency to conduct its own, "much less expensive" audit. Melnicoe argued vehemently to the legislators, before being shut down by the chairwoman, that the audit could be best performed in-house and anything else was unnecessary.

"I'm sorry sir," committee Chair and Assemblywoman Rebecca Cohn, D-Saratoga, replied, "but in this committee we believe you get what you pay for."

Cohn said she was concerned that CGCC was not performing its fiduciary

duty as trustee for the fund and seemed amazed that the CGCC made decisions costing their trustees millions of dollars without including the trustees in the process. Melnicoe stated that he was concerned with the Tribes that were "paying the freight." This response was met with open-eyed silence by the committee.

State Auditor Elaine Howle also pointed out to the committee that the CGCC's contract with an outside auditor called for nothing more than a "fiscal statement" for the commission and that did not constitute a thorough audit of the agency's "management and handling" of the fund.

CNIGA will continue to monitor the status of the audit. Word from CGCC sources tells us that Mr. Melnicoe is now convinced that he can control the outcome of the audit by controlling the information to the State Auditor. CNIGA will continue to demand that the CGCC engages in full disclosure with the auditors and that anything less is unacceptable.

Trip an 'eye-opener'

Key congressional staffers visit tribes

By DAVE PALERMO

Trust Reform, revenue sharing, bond financing and proposed amendments to the Indian Gaming Regulatory Act took center stage during three days of meetings August 12-14 between California tribes and top congressional staff members.

Staff members with the U.S. House Resources Committee and Senate Committee on Indian Affairs met with more than 60 tribal leaders and representatives in Sacramento before visiting the Paskenta Band of Nomlaki Indians near Orland; Cachil Dehe Band of Winton Indians of Colusa; Mooretown and Redding rancherias; and Hoopa Valley Tribe near Eureka.

"This was an extremely important event because of the tribal-federal government trust relationship and the issues that are growing out of that relationship," said Jacob Coin, executive director of the California Nations Indian Gaming Association, which organized the visit.

"Tribal government gaming, in my opinion, is as important a trust resource as timber, as water, as land, as any other resource."

Staff members said after the three-day event they would relay to their committees feedback from California tribes on trust reform, revenue sharing and proposed amendments to IGRA.



Jack Portlock, Director of Mooretown Security, gives presentation



Tahsuda and Fluhr are given a tour of the Cachil Dehe tribal office in Colusa

John Tahsuda, senior counsel with the Senate Committee on Indian Affairs, said the Department of the Interior should develop criteria on revenue sharing. California Gov. Gray Davis is hoping to generate \$680 million from tribes to help eliminate a \$38 billion budget deficit, a move some tribes believe violates IGRA.

Tribal gaming under IGRA was intended to help build strong tribal governments and "economic development for the tribe, not the state," Tahsuda said. Beyond reimbursing state and local governments for the costs of gaming on Indian lands, revenue sharing with states was never the intent of Congress.

Tahsuda also said he would report back to his committee concern by California non-gaming tribes that proposed IGRA amendments could dictate how they can spend money from a revenue sharing fund.

Tom Brierton, tribal affairs specialist with the House Committee on Resources, said he was impressed with how smaller tribes are using gaming revenues to provide government services.

"This visit has really been an eye-opener," he said.

Brierton also was encouraged by Hoopa Valley's self-governance program, which includes management of forestry, water, fish, wildlife and other resources once handled by the Bureau of Indian Affairs.

The staff director pledged that House Chairman Richard Pombo, R-Tracy, would direct a letter to the BIA to ensure that trust reform legislation stemming from the Cobell vs. Norton litigation does not interfere with Hoopa's management of tribal resources.



Colusa Pre-School Program

"That letter is large," Hoopa Valley Chairman Clifford Lyle Marshall said. Pombo will also include Hoopa Valley on a list of tribes to be considered for proposed legislation that would turn over to some tribes the management of non-Indian forest lands. Hoopa Valley has gotten international recognition for its eco-friendly management of 90,000 acres of tribal timber resources. "We think tribes have shown a very, very strong track record in forest management," said Chris Fluhr, director of Native American and Insular Affairs for the House Resources Committee.

Tom Rodgers, president of Carlyle Consultants and chief lobbyist for the National Indian Gaming Association, discussed pending legislation that would give tribal governments the same ability as states in issuing tax-exempt bonds.

"We are not fortune 500 companies, we are governments," Rodgers said. "We should be able to issue debt for the same reasons states do."

Rodgers said those reasons include financing for hotels and golf courses compatible with tourism

generated by tribal government gaming. "There are 2,649 state and municipal golf courses," he said.

Brierton said Pombo is pleased with the cooperation he has gotten from CNIGA and its staff. "I can't tell you how much we value CNIGA as an organization for the input it provides us on legislation," Brierton said. "One of the first calls we make is to CNIGA."



Pictured from left to right: Tahsuda, Brierton, and Fluhr

Federal Protections: *continued from page 3*

tribes and the federal government, the parameters of which are set down very clearly in the Indian Gaming Regulatory Act of 1988.

But the intent of Congress in drafting IGRA and the letter of the act are being severely compromised by state governments seeking tribal revenues to alleviate budget deficits. And too many tribes anxious to snatch the social and economic benefits of casino gaming have been snared in a spider's web of tribal-state compacts that demand excessive revenue sharing and erode their sovereign rights to govern their own lands.

Billions of dollars of tribal gaming revenues – trust resources that should be providing needed government services to the tribes and their people – are instead being diverted to the coffers of state governments and county and municipal agencies.

Tribes, Congress, Interior, the BIA, and the entire federal government must begin working together to put an end to what has become a most disturbing trend.

WHO BENEFITS?

IGRA states very clearly that Indians are to be the primary beneficiary of tribal government gaming revenues, not the state or federal governments. Gaming on Indian lands was intended to build tribal economies and strong tribal governments.

Although IGRA allows tribal-state compacts to include “the assessment by the State of such activities in such amounts as are necessary to defray the costs of regulating such [tribal government gaming] activity,” it precludes any taxation of tribal gaming.

IGRA also prohibits states from using revenue sharing as bargaining leverage in negotiating tribal-state compacts under which tribes can engage in government gaming. “No state may refuse to enter into

[compact] negotiations...based upon the lack of authority in such state, or its political subdivision, to impose such a tax, fee, charge, or other assessment,” IGRA states.

Indians learned early on that the mandate of IGRA did not stand the test of states that leveraged their willingness to negotiate tribal-state compacts on forcing tribes to commit to exorbitant revenue sharing agreements.

“Compact negotiations have become a smokescreen for extortion,” Jacob Viarrial, governor of the Pojoaque Pueblo in Santa Fe, N.M., testified at a recent hearing of the Senate Committee on Indian Affairs.

Many states negotiating new compacts or renegotiating existing agreements are basing revenue sharing demands on Connecticut, where the Mashantucket Pequots pay the state 25 percent of slot revenues at its Foxwoods Casino.

The Pequot agreement “set an unreasonable precedent from which other state governments have begun to shape their demands,” Brenda Soulliere, chairwoman of the California Nations Indian Gaming Association, told the Senate committee.

There are only two casinos in Connecticut, one of the nation's most lucrative gambling markets, and the tribes have a monopoly on legal gambling. Fifty-two California tribes currently operate casinos, many in highly competitive regions of the state. California has card clubs, pari-mutuel gambling and a state lottery. The state already ranked sixth in the nation in gambling revenues before tribal-state compacts were signed into law in 1999.

Yet California Gov. Gray Davis, faced with a \$38 billion budget shortfall, is seeking \$680 million more than the hundreds of millions of dollars tribes are already paying annually into the Special Distribution Fund and the Revenue Sharing Trust Fund.

“It really gets old being looked at as a cash cow,” Soulliere told the Los Angeles Times.

Pedro Johnson, public affairs executive director for the Mashantucket Pequots, acknowledges that what his tribe pays should not be a benchmark for other Indian nations.

“States should not balance their budgets on the backs of Indian governments,” Johnson said. “It's patently unfair.”

RESOLVING THE ISSUE

BIA Acting Assistant Secretary Aurene M. Martin says the agency reviews new and renegotiated compacts “on a case-by-case basis.”

“We look at it to determine if the tribe is able to make the payment and if what they are getting in return for that payment is of sufficient economic benefit to them,” she said.

The logic is fuzzy. And the results have certainly been mixed.

“The law allows [states] to demand excess money,” committee Chairman Sen. Ben Nighthorse Campbell R-Colo., said of IGRA's revenue sharing provisions. “There's no statistical basis for revenue sharing policy, no broad regulation that guides the Department [of the Interior] either.

“States are taking money from destitute tribes,” Campbell said. “I can't imagine what the tribes are getting from the states.”

Opening IGRA to revisions is dangerous. Requiring the BIA to adopting a policy to guide future compact approval on a more strict reading of the act makes sense.

Or, perhaps, Interior may one day find itself back in federal court, defending itself from charges of failing to protect tribal trust resources. This time, the resources involved will be tribal government gaming revenues.

Update: AB 673 (Horton)

AB 673 (Horton), the legislation which creates the backfill for the Revenue Sharing Trust Fund shortfall was chaptered into law on August 11th, 2003. Since the bill was an “urgency” measure, it took effect immediately.

CNIGA has contacted the CGCC's controller on the status of the shortfall the money transfer has been completed this

week and that the payments making up the shortfall to non-gaming Tribes should take place within the next three to four weeks. CNIGA will continue to follow the payments and notify our member Tribes as we learn of developments.

CNIGA supported legislative efforts to allocate a portion of the Special Distribution Fund to back fill the short fall in the

Revenue Sharing Trust Fund. The CNIGA member tribes were unanimous in their position that non-compact tribes receive the \$1.1 million as provided for in the compact.

AB 673 also authorized funds to support programs dealing with problem gambling.

CNIGA Member Tribe Profile

Cabazon Band of Mission Indians

Many tribal members of the Cabazon Band of Mission Indians are direct descendents of Chief Cabazon, the leader of the Desert Cahuilla Indians from the 1830s until the 1870s.

When Anglo-Americans arrived in the 1840s, they referred to most of the native people in Southern California as Mission Indians. The name stuck, but the Cabazons were never really under the control of the Spanish mission system.

The Cabazons have a rich history that predates both the Spanish and Anglo arrivals in the region by thousands of years.

Cabazon ancestors were primarily Cahuilla Indians. The Cahuilla were divided into two moieties or groups of clans: the Wildcat and Coyote. They were further divided into approximately a dozen patrilineal clans, each having its own name, territory and common ancestry.

In the 1850s, the Cahuilla population began to dwindle. The Southern Pacific Railroad laid claim to local water rights, resulting in poor crops and forcing Cahuilla to move many times. Chief Cabazon's people were living near Indio, California, when President Ulysses S. Grant issued an executive order on May 15, 1876, creating the Cabazon Reservation.

There were 600 tribal members when the Cabazon Reservation was defined as three parcels of raw desert totaling 2,400 acres. Southern Pacific Railroad later claimed 700 acres to create a railroad and interstate right-of-way.

The next hundred years were difficult ones. But in the mid-1970s, the Cabazon Band of Mission Indians took a major step toward ensuring their survival: They developed a master plan. The key to that plan, and the future of the Cabazons, was economic diversity.

In 1981 the Cabazons opened the Cabazon Indian Casino which offered several types of card games. In 1983 the tribe opened a high stakes bingo parlor. Shortly after, the State of California filed a lawsuit against Cabazon. The case, known as the Cabazon decision, was ultimately decided by the United States Supreme Court in 1987 when they ruled that Indian tribes have the inherent right to offer gaming on their lands without

interference from state and local governments. In response, State governments immediately appealed to Congress for legislation creating a role for the state in tribal gaming activities. In 1988 Congress passed the Indian Gaming Regulatory Act (IGRA).

Armed with the Cabazon decision, the tribe continued with their economic plan. Today, the reservation covers 1,450 acres in parcels spread over 16 miles. The largest parcel contains the tribal administration office, Public Safety Department and several business enterprises, including entertainment venues: Fantasy Springs Casino and Fantasy Lanes Family Bowling Center. Another parcel is dedicated to the Cabazon Resource Recovery Park, which includes the tribe's First Nation Recovery Incorporated tire-recycling operation.

On March 23, 2001, the Cabazon Band of Mission Indians and the United States Department of Commerce signed a Memorandum of Understanding establishing the first Export Assistance Center on the reservation of a self-governed Native American tribe.

The Cabazon United States Export Assistance Center provides the local international business community with market information and counseling leading to new-to-export and new-to-market activities, as well as the development of business client-based activities (e.g., joint trade, joint international marketing briefings, educational briefings/seminars, trade missions, trade shows, industry roundtables, e-commerce).

The Cabazon office is the only Export Assistance Center to offer travel and tourism information for foreign visitors to the area.

The Cabazon tribal government is one of the largest employers in the Coachella Valley, providing employment for Indians and non-Indians. In addition, the tribe regularly contributes to charitable causes and champions the efforts of fighting for sovereign rights.

In July, the Cabazon Band celebrated the finalizing of many years of planning with a tribal blessing and prayer to mark the advent of construction on the tribe's 12-story hotel plus convention and entertainment center. The hotel is scheduled to open prior to New Year's Eve, 2004 with the convention center opening shortly thereafter.

The celebration also feted a landmark \$145.5 million municipal-style, tax exempt conduit bond which closed July 10. It was unlike other municipal bonds used by Indian tribes in that it partnered with a California state agency earmarked for a tribal project.

The hotel has been something the tribes has considered building since before it opened the Fantasy Springs Casino. The tribe's reservation in Indio was once no more than a parcel of sand along Interstate 10. Now, the tribe hopes it will anchor the advent of economic growth for the eastern valley, bringing jobs, homes, and infrastructure to an area reaching far beyond the reservation.

Recently, the tribe, along with the Viejas Band of Kumeyaay Indians of Alpine California, the Mashantucket Pequot and the Mohegan Tribes of Connecticut joined the U.S. Chamber of Commerce as the first tribes in the nation to join the Chamber as governments.

The Cabazon Band of Mission Indians strongly believes in preserving their history, traditions and culture in order to maintain their treasured sovereignty for future generations. Through their semi-annual powwows and newly completed Cabazon Cultural Museum, the tribe hopes to continue to foster a sense of community among Native Americans, as well as providing others with the opportunity to celebrate and embrace the richness of their culture.



Tribal Leader Profile

Chairman Maurice Lyons - Morongo Band of Mission Indians

Born in Riverside County as one of nine children, Maurice Lyons grew up on the Morongo Indian Reservation. "Life on the reservation prior to gaming was a hard life," said Lyons. "We didn't have electricity so until I was seven or eight we used kerosene lamps. We would stuff the cracks of our windows with paper to keep out the wind. Having that kind of a life to start with made me appreciate the importance of tribal self-sufficiency."

Lyons began his public service career in 1994 and has served as a tribal housing commissioner and as chairman of the Morongo Headstart Parent Policy Committee. He was first elected tribal chairman in July, 2001 and was recently re-elected tribal chair this past July.

The Morongo tribal members conduct elections annually to cast their ballots for a tribal chairperson and six members of their tribal council. Terms of office are for two years and are staggered. Chairman Lyons and the council establish policy and oversee the legal and business affairs, economic development, and community services for the tribe.

Chairman Lyons also works with both state and federal legislators on Indian issues and matters affecting tribal government and economic development.

"Today tribal governments are in a transition that began with independence, progressed through a long, difficult period of survival, and are now moving again to self-determination and control. We plan to continue our progress, protect the legacy of our sovereignty and provide for the future self-sufficiency of our people," said Lyons.

Lyons is deeply committed to youth programs and language programs designed to preserve tribal culture, customs and traditions. "Our heritage is everything and we are working hard to ensure our children

learn our languages and traditions," he said. Lyons attended Banning High School and in those days there were no classes available in tribal history or culture. "Governor Davis has signed legislation that will provide for true Indian education in California and will help protect our sacred sites and artifacts."

Lyons is also making it a priority to improve the quality of life on the reservation.

"We are moving forward to take care of the children, families and elders who live on the reservation. Planning is underway for a new administration building and complex," said Lyons.

Lyons represents the Morongo tribe with the California Nations Indian Gaming Association (CNIGA) and with the Tribal Alliance of Sovereign Indian Nations (TASIN), a regional federation of 13 tribal governments based in the Riverside and San Bernardino counties. The Morongo tribe is one of 557 federally recognized Indian tribes.

He is married to Barbara Gonzalez Lyons, vice chairwoman of the Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians. The couple have eight children and three grandchildren.



Associate Member Profile

Tribal First

TRIBAL FIRST truly does "insure Native America", and have been doing so for more than 10 years. We are the largest provider of insurance solutions to Indian Country nationally, and are also the leader in our specialty areas of Indian Gaming facilities, Tribal Workers' Compensation, High-value Property (casino) and Tribal Self-insurance. We are particularly honored to have been selected as the insurance solution for more than forty Tribal Gaming facilities in California alone.

Our approach is unique in that we do not look to insurance as the easy answer, but as one of several risk management options. Tribes are distinctive in their ability to manage risk through Tribal ordinances, immunities, gaming compacts and the

Federal Tort Claims Act. We understand these elements, and work with the community to tailor risk management programs that incorporates the Tribal legal structure, and insurance.

Our insurance programs are backed by "A" rated insurers and designed to protect both the legal sovereignty of Native American tribes, and their physical and financial assets. These solutions are also above reproach, having passed the review of Tribes, lending institutions, management companies, financial auditors and California State Agencies.

Tribal First has also developed health benefit solutions for both, Tribal members as well as employees. These unique benefit offerings are available for Life Insurance, Disability, Dental, Vision, Medical and Voluntary Products. A few plan highlights include; PPO and HMO offerings, plan integration with Indian Health Services, plan document for Sovereign Nations and discounted pricing on combining Tribal members with employees.

We support these programs with a brokerage and claims management staff second to none, through local insurance broker/partners, or as with some Tribes, on a direct basis.

TRIBAL FIRST has been a consistent sponsor of CNIGA, through its tradeshow, and legislative efforts, for many years now. We stood with you through Propositions 5, and 1A, and will stay the course as tribal government gaming in California continues to grow.





California Nations
Indian Gaming Association

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Responsible Gambling Awareness Week
A California Tribal Government Initiative

Sponsored by
The California Nations Indian Gaming Association &
The California Council on Problem Gambling

Monday, October 13 – Sacramento, CA

Pathological Gambling Among Teenagers
Recovery Roundtable
Middle School Assembly

Wednesday, October 15 – Sacramento, California

Identifying and Defining the Problem
A Public Health Approach to Problem Gambling
California Confronts Problem Gambling

Friday, October 17 – Pechanga Resort & Casino - Temecula, California

Addiction in Indian Country
Responsible Gambling/Walking the Walk
Responsible Gambling Workshop