

A. SUMMARY SHEET
PROPOSED CONVEYANCE OF FEE PROPERTY TO FEDERAL TRUST AND
CONSTRUCTION & OPERATION OF A CLASS II GAMING FACILITY
PICAYUNE RANCHERIA, MADERA COUNTY, CALIFORNIA

This Environmental Assessment is being performed in accordance with 30 BIAM Supplement 1 which requires that the Bureau of Indian Affairs and the Picayune Rancheria collectively comply with the provisions of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and applicable law as mandated by the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) for proposed actions which may affect the human environment. The format utilized for this environmental assessment is derived from 30 BIAM (Bureau of Indian Affairs Manual) Supplement 1.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Three major activities are proposed under this action:

1. Proposed is the development and operation of a gaming facility in which bingo and other Class II games will be played. The gaming facility will be totally within the Picayune Rancheria on fee lands owned by the Tribe. The affected property includes AP Parcel Nos. 540-330-025 (19.0 ± acres) and 540-330-026 (8.49 ± acres) Madera County, California.

Architectural plans have been drafted for a 39,450 square foot metal and woodframed gaming facility named the Double Eagle Casino and Resort inclusive of 4,400 square feet of administrative offices. In addition, a package sewage treatment plant, water system development and associated circulation and parking are proposed. Double Eagle Casino and Resort Casino will eventually operate 24 hours per day, seven days per week but will initially open for a limited schedule of eighteen hours daily. Food services will be offered. Alcoholic beverages are not being contemplated to be served at this time. Ancillary uses include a non-banked card room facility; a bingo facility seating 650; 500 to 750 video machines; and a Cafeteria - Snack Bar with designated seating. Parking will be provided for 1,000 cars and 6 buses. An overflow area for up to 5 buses is also planned. The gaming facility anticipates to employ between 300 and 375 individuals.

2. In addition to this action, the Tribe is proposing to convey the subject property to Trust status pursuant to the Court order under Hardwick v. U.S., et al. and/or the Indian Land Consolidation Act (25 U.S.C. §465).

As indicated in the Court order, the subject property which is within the boundaries of the Picayune Rancheria was declared for jurisdictional purposes as "Indian Country" within the meaning of 18 U.S.C. §1152 in 1987. The proposed conveyance of Chukchansi Tribal fee land, about 3 miles from Coursegold, California to Federal Trust status affects parcels 540-330-025 and 540-330-026, totaling 27.49 acres.

3. The proposed action also includes a financing agreement by and between the Picayune Rancheria and a private contractor to construct a gaming facility within the Picayune Rancheria. A management agreement between both parties is not being contemplated. Instead, a development agreement and business lease has been executed and requires compliance with 25 U.S.C. 415 and 25 C.F.R. Part 162. This business development lease will require approval by the U.S. Department of Interior.

The goal of this document is to assess the impacts the construction and operation of a full service casino, conveyance of the property to Federal Trust, and approval of the business development lease will have on the human environment. Both beneficial and adverse impacts are anticipated to result from implementation of this proposed federal action. Easements or right-of-ways are not contemplated under the proposed activities.

It has been determined that the proposed development project is not an action which will significantly affect the quality of the human environment. The potential economic benefits in terms of employment opportunities and income for the Chukchansi Tribe of the Picayune Rancheria and to the human environment out-weigh any impacts construction and operation of a gaming facility, conveyance of the property to Trust status, and approval of the business development lease will have on the biotic environment. Some impacts to both the natural and human environment will occur. These impacts are discussed in the Environmental Consequences section of this document and mitigation recommendations are proposed.

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Applicant: Chukchansi Tribe of the Picayune Rancheria, Gilbert Cordero, Chairperson, P.O. Box 269, Coursegold, CA 93614 (209) 683-6633.

Comment Period: Upon determination by the Lead Agency that either a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) or a finding that an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) is required, the appropriate finding will be published in a newspaper of general circulation. Comments will be received and considered within the period specified in the legal notice. Until that time, comments regarding this document are encouraged and should be submitted to the Applicant.

Certification, Preparer and Date: Based on information contained in the following report, this project will not have a significant effect on the environment. The issuance of a FONSI is therefore recommended.

Signature *L. Robert Ulibarri*

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