

Stand Up For California!

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Local Elected Officials, Community Groups Participate in Town Hall to Voice Opposition to Proposed Off-Reservation Gaming Facility

Madera, Calif. – The Madera Ministerial Association today hosted a town hall meeting in Madera for County residents to discuss the proposed off-reservation gaming facility by the North Fork Rancheria of Mono Indians. Attendees heard from *Madera County Supervisor David Rogers*, *Manuel Nevarez from the Madera Community Action Network* and *Cheryl Schmit of Stand Up for California!*

The proposed casino has seen opposition from U.S. Senator Dianne Feinstein, First Southern Baptist Church in Madera, Madera Christian School, trustees of the Madera Unified School District, and other local and statewide community groups. The North Fork Rancheria off-reservation casino proposal is one of two recent positive determinations by the U.S. Department of the Interior despite strong community opposition. The second off-reservation casino located in Yuba County, is also strongly opposed by Senator Feinstein, *Stand Up for California!*, and many other local community groups.

The U.S. Assistant Secretary of the Interior astonishingly made the determination without consideration and input from local residents. A recent poll shows that Madera County voters strongly oppose allowing tribes to build off-reservation casinos, 70 percent to only 25 percent supporting. Sixty-seven percent of voters also specifically oppose the North Fork Rancheria casino.

“Off-reservation casinos are in direct violation of the promises made to voters that Indian gaming would remain on Indian lands,” said *Cheryl Schmit, Executive Director for Stand Up for California!*. “Allowing for off-reservation gaming will set a dangerous precedent, opening the floodgates for tribes across the state to reservation shop for more profitable locations for their casinos.”

Off-reservation gaming has seen growing opposition from elected officials, community organizations and even tribes themselves. There are many additional pending applications by California tribes to acquire non-tribal lands throughout the State for the purposes of building off-reservation casinos.

“I strongly oppose off-reservation gaming as it gives an unfair advantage over local businesses and other tribal casinos, will result in a loss of quality of life and environmental quality and contributes to the congestion of highway 99 and other local roads,” said *David Rogers, Madera County Supervisor*. “These projects are in conflict with the constructs of California law and the will of the people of this state.”

Rogers continues to explain that, “the fate of the casinos already approved by the Department of Interior rests in the hands of Governor Jerry Brown, as off-reservation sites must pass through what is called a ‘two-part determination.’ Although the federal government has mistakenly opened the doors for these casinos, Governor Brown has the chance to reject the proposals, keeping in line with what California voters agreed to when they passed Proposition 1A allowing tribal gaming to take place only on existing Indian lands.”

Anyone opposed to the off-reservation gaming facilities by the North Fork Rancheria in Madera County or the Enterprise Rancheria in Yuba County is encouraged to contact the Governor, asking him to not concur with the proposals as they set a dangerous precedent statewide.

Stand Up for California! is a statewide organization with a focus on gambling issues including tribal gaming, card clubs, horse racing, charitable gaming and the state lottery. For more, information about the organization, visit www.standupca.org.

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