



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES

PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICE

Mr. Eric Cortez
613 Singley Road
Loleta, California 95551

March 8, 1996

Indian Health Service
California Area Office
1825 Bell Street, Suite 200
Sacramento, California 95825-1097

Dear Mr. Cortez:

I received a copy of your letter to Indian Health Service (IHS), dated 1-29-96, and would like to provide the following information.

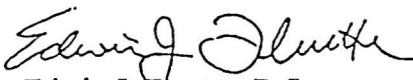
The Indian Health Service, Office of Environmental Health & Engineering (OEH&E) and the Humboldt County Department of Public Health conducted a site evaluation in July 1991, for the possible construction of individual homes in the Singley Road area in Loleta, California, at the request of the Bear River Band of the Rohnerville Rancheria officials.

The IHS/OEH&E is responsible for construction of water and waste systems (individual and community) for Indian people throughout California. We have little involvement in the construction of community buildings and gaming facilities (casinos) on Indian lands and do not provide sanitation facilities for such establishments. It is usually the tribe's preference that we have no involvement in their personal business endeavors, including the planning, design, and construction of gaming facilities on their lands.

I am not familiar with laws or agencies that regulate/enforce gaming operations and activity on Indian lands. Our engineering staff in the Redding District Office and the Arcata Field Office have not had involvement in any aspect of casino construction in Loleta, CA. It is my understanding that an environmental assessment was conducted at the site by Visions Enterprises on November 20, 1990. Mr. Patrick Craney, IHS/OEH&E Field Engineer in the Arcata Field Office, recently offered technical assistance and consultation (letter attached) to the tribe regarding construction of the gaming facility and possible impacts. The tribe did not respond.

The Indian Health Service does not have regulation or enforcement authority over business endeavors on Indian lands. Upon request from the Bear River Band, our staff can provide technical assistance to help ensure existing water sources are not negatively impacted and to determine if the existing site can accommodate a liquid waste disposal system for the proposed gaming facility.

If you have questions or would like to discuss this issue further, please call me at (916)566-7001, ext. 251.


Edwin J. Fluette, R.S.
Associate Director, OEH&E

