

Editor:

My wife and I were encouraged to see your article about the Tish Non development by the Bear River Band of Rohnerville Rancheria. As residents of Singley Hill Road since 2003, we know first-hand the effects of the casino on our neighborhood, and we were hoping for an article that would shed light as to how this extensive development was going to further impact our lives. We were grateful for the portions of the article that allowed two of our neighbors to explain how the casino has significantly altered what was once a little-used road that was inviting to bicyclists, birders and pedestrians. We also appreciate the disruption and dislocation that has affected the Bear River Band for many generations, and we hope for the best for the occupants of the new housing project.

However, I believe your writer could have provided a more complete perspective by looking at publicly available sheriff log records that objectively show how the casino has changed the nature of life on Singley Hill. Prior to a protest hearing regarding the casino's liquor license last year, I had the opportunity to review these records for the period October, 2001 through December, 2008. Although I do not claim this to be an official tally, I need to say that I prepared these figures in order to present them at the hearing, and I was prepared to state my findings under oath. Ultimately, I did not testify, and I recycled the logs shortly after the hearing. However, I did retain my summary. As I say, I would have sworn to these findings had I been requested to do so.

The numbers are pretty startling. I tallied logged items that involved the area only from the casino and north on Singley Hill Road. I did not include Bear River Drive; that small residential area was there before the casino and still is. These were my findings:

- From 10/01-6/05 (the casino opened in July, 2005)—a period of 45 months--there were a total of eleven logged items regarding activity on Singley Hill north of Bear River. Eight of these were for "suspicious activity"; the other three were categorized as "disturbance," "thefts/fraud," and "vandalism/prowling."
- In the first 6 months of the casino's operation (July through December, 2005), there were a total of 19 items, including two each for "narcotics" and "assault."
- In 2006 there were 71 logged items. In addition to the "narcotics" (3) and assault (3) items, there were also five items for "vandalism/prowling," five for "thefts/fraud," one for "man down" and another for "foot pursuit."
- In 2007 there were 68 items, including 11 for "disturbance," three "assaults," seven "thefts/fraud" and five "trespass."
- 2008 saw 91 items logged by the sheriff's office, including four "assaults," three "vandalism/prowling," three "DUIs" and one for the ever-popular "man down."

I want to re-state what I said above. These items pertain only to activities north of Bear River Drive, including the casino, not logged items involving the Bear River residential area, nor any activity south of Bear River Drive on Singley Hill Road. I was attempting to gauge the increase in the need for law-enforcement activity relating to the casino and the neighborhood north on Singley Hill.

Tribal Council Secretary Aileen Meyers can say she "resents" complaints by the neighbors about the effect of the casino, but it's hard to argue with the figures: In the 45

months leading up to the opening of the casino, there were eleven logged items. In the 42 months afterward, there were 249.

To state the obvious: There is a real need for a deterrent to discourage casino users from exiting the casino and traveling north on Singley Hill. It's more than a matter of the lost night sky, prevalence of litter on the road or the affected bird population—it's a matter of protection from criminal elements that were pretty much foreign to the neighborhood before the casino came. The Bear River Band of Rohnerville agreed to erect such a deterrent when they obtained their liquor license in 2005. This is coming upon five years and there is still no relief. It takes a real leap of faith to believe the tribe worked as diligently with BIA to inform them of the facts and the need for them to change their decision on the barrier as they did to get the Ferrien property in trust.

One more point. In the article, Marcie Jake complains about the conditions at Basayo Village. "People fightin' and drinking, drugs and whole bit." I can only say, Welcome to the neighborhood, Marcie. Just don't expect too much of a change.

Brian Nash
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