

**THE GUN LAKE TRIBE**



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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**Contact: James Nye: (517) 485-8060**  
**Cell: (269) 598-4248**

# **GUN LAKE WINS LAWSUIT**

## ***U.S. District Court Decision Affirms Gun Lake Tribe's Right to Build Casino***

Bradley, Michigan – Today the Gun Lake Tribe (Tribe) announced that U.S. District Judge John Garrett Penn rendered a decision in favor of the Tribe and the United States in the federal lawsuit brought by Michigan Gambling Opposition (MichGO). The lawsuit filed against the U.S. Department of Interior (DOI) challenged the DOI's May 2005 decision to take land into trust for the benefit of the Tribe, allowing the Tribe to begin construction on its casino gaming project. Judge Penn found there were no facts which would entitle MichGO to any relief on the four issues raised in MichGO's challenge.

“This decision is a cause for great celebration, both for the Tribe and the people of West Michigan who dream of economic opportunities and good paying jobs with great benefits,” said D.K. Sprague, Tribal Chairman. “We are now one very short step from recovering an important piece of our traditional homelands and we will continue to work with the federal government to expeditiously complete the trust process,” added Sprague.

Judge Penn found "the EA [Environmental Assessment] thoroughly considered the Bradley Property's foreseeable impacts on growth, residential and commercial development, land and water resources, wetlands, wildlife, socioeconomic and cultural issues, traffic and pollution." The Tribe is prepared to counter any potential MichGO appeal of Judge Penn's decision and accompanying request to stay, or delay, the DOI's stated intention to take the land in to trust.

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It is unknown whether MichGO will appeal. However, the Tribe is confident that it will win should an appeal be filed. Attempts to appeal similar decisions have a history of failure. MichGO's attorneys lost an appeal involving identical challenges to the Pokagon Band's casino project.

"We don't believe an appeal by MichGO will delay the taking of our land into trust due to the previous decision of the appellate court. We look forward to starting construction as soon as possible because both the Tribe and West Michigan families need economic relief now," said Sprague.

With construction of the Tribe's casino and entertainment project estimated to take approximately 14-16 months, the facility could open as early as the summer of 2008.

In addition to finalizing the trust process, the Tribe will be simultaneously working to obtain a Class III gaming compact with the State of Michigan.

"We've played by the rules and waited patiently for the Governor to sign our compact for more than six (6) years. With Judge Penn's ruling and the inevitability of our land going into trust, we are now officially asking Governor Granholm to approve a tribal-state Class III compact," said Sprague.

A 2005 survey research poll of 600 likely West Michigan voters, commissioned by the Tribe and the Kalamazoo Regional Chamber of Commerce revealed support for the Gun Lake Casino and a gaming compact by a 2-to-1 margin. Over forty (40) organizations and 10,000 members of Friends of Gun Lake Indians (FOGLI) publicly support the Gun Lake Casino.

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*The Gun Lake Tribe's proposed casino will create 1,800 direct jobs with a total average annual compensation package of \$40,000; 3,100 indirect jobs; and more than \$20 million per year in direct purchases of goods and services from West Michigan businesses.*

*For more information visit [www.mbpi.org](http://www.mbpi.org), and [www.fogli.org](http://www.fogli.org)*