



# In Land We Trust

## **Federal Action Restores Tribal Land for Gun Lake Tribe**

Greetings!

Bradley, Michigan - Today the federal government placed 147 acres of land into trust for the benefit of the Gun Lake Tribe to use for economic development purposes. The Tribe can now proceed with construction of the Gun Lake Casino. Two recent significant federal court rulings preceded the trust acquisition.

"Today we rejoice knowing that all our hard work has paid off and the sacrifices of our ancestors was not made in vain," said D.K. Sprague, Tribal Chairman. "Now it's official. Justice has been served to those who were motivated by greed and power to delay this project for nearly ten years."

Today the casino land title was transferred to the United States government to be held in trust on behalf of the Tribe. The Department of the Interior authorized the title transfer, which is not open to a legal challenge. This action ends any legal ambiguity about the Tribe's ability to conduct gaming in accordance with federal law.

Trust status was stalled by frivolous lawsuits for nearly four years by Michigan Gambling Opposition (MichGO) and its financiers in 23 is Enough. The last meritless legal motions were rejected by the U.S. Supreme Court and finally Federal District Judge Richard J. Leon.

"We said from day one that we will prevail over these frivolous legal challenges, and we did. We also said that we will never do business with any person or group that opposed this project," said Sprague.

Through many legal victories that were followed by long periods of delay, thousands of people stuck by the Tribe. The first of these groups was Friends of the Gun Lake Indians (FOGLI). Beginning with just a handful, FOGLI has grown to over 10,000 supporters.

Local governments, business chambers, building trade unions, and civic groups followed to number over forty different organizations that support the casino. The casino proposal that started amongst public chaos caused by casino opponents ended up with editorial endorsements from newspapers in Detroit all the way to Holland.

"One of our dearest friends was the late Bill Brown, the beloved editor of the Allegan County News, who once wrote an article titled 'In Land We

Trust.' The Tribe is thankful for all our supporters, including the wonderful people who make up FOGLI," said Sprague.

Throughout the entire process no unit of government or court of law was ever convinced to oppose the casino by anti-Gun Lake Tribe forces.

"This is great news for area residents and business owners who have had to wait so many years. This tribal gaming project is going to create jobs and business opportunities for our community. Congratulations to the Tribe and the ten thousand-strong members of FOGLI. I am excited to work with the Tribe for years to come," said Roger VanVolkinburg, Wayland Township Supervisor.

Soon the Tribe will hold a press conference to announce a groundbreaking date, provide information for those who want to apply for a casino job, and inform area business owners how they can bid on contracts for goods and services.

The Gun Lake Casino will be operated by the Tribe's management partner, Station Casinos.

FOGLI COUNCIL