

FAQs



Frequently asked questions....

What kind of amenities will the Nüwü Casino Resort have?

The Twenty-Nine Palms Band of Mission Indians is planning an exciting destination-style project that will be entirely sensitive to and incorporate elements of the natural landscape. The casino-resort will offer all the excitement of Las Vegas while retaining a quaint and comfortable “local” ambience.

The casino will feature:

- 350 state-of-the-art slot machines
- Exciting table games featuring blackjack and Texas Hold'em poker
- State-of-the-art bingo hall
- High-end restaurant and bar
- All-you-can-eat buffet
- Plans may include a 14,000-sq-ft bowling alley and billiards room

he first phase of the Tribe's overall economic development project also will include a first-class RV Park, state-of-the-art sewage treatment facility, and miles of dedicated hiking trails. Subsequent phases of the project may include a 100+-room national brand resort hotel, retail center, executive championship golf course and residential properties.

The Tribe is committed to using cutting edge exterior lighting technology to significantly reduce effects on the area's night skies, one of the region's biggest attractions.

The Tribe also is exploring the feasibility of building a one-megawatt solar energy plant and investigating cutting-edge absorption chiller cogeneration technology to help power its facilities, reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and help protect the environment.

What about the RV Park?

The RV Park will be the newest and most state-of-the-art RV Park in the High Desert. The facility will feature more than 100 RV, tent and cabin sites, as well as plenty of excellent amenities, including:

- Electrical, water, cable TV, telephone and sewer hook-ups
- Wireless Internet access
- 24-hour convenience store
- Swimming pools
- Showers and locker rooms
- BBQ facilities
- Dump site
- Laundry facilities
- On-site security

The facility will be managed by the Tribe through a franchise agreement with Kampgrounds of America (KOA), the leading campground management company in the nation.

Guests can spend their days camping and exploring Joshua Tree National Park and the High Desert's scenic beauty and colorful past. At night, they can have a barbecue then try their luck at the **Nüwü Casino Resort** just steps away.

As with all of the Tribe's economic developments, every precaution will be taken to ensure minimal impacts to the surrounding landscape.

What will the Tribe do to protect the pristine environment?

The Twenty-Nine Palms Band of Mission Indians is carrying on a tradition thousands of years in the making by doing all it can to protect the environment during the construction and operation of its casino-resort and RV park.

The Tribe's comprehensive Environmental Assessment for the Nüwü Casino Resort & RV Park will address mitigation for impacts in the following areas, including but not limited to:

- Light pollution ("night skies")
- Air and noise pollution
- Water quality
- Wastewater treatment
- Biological and cultural resources
- Flora and fauna
- Traffic and transportation
- Land use and resources
- Public services
- Roads and infrastructure
- Visual resources, aesthetics

The Tribe is exploring the feasibility of building a one-megawatt solar energy plant and investigating cutting-edge absorption chiller cogeneration technology to help power its facilities, reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and help protect the environment.

In addition, the Tribe is fully committed to using cutting edge exterior technology that will significantly reduce any potential effects on the area's night skies, one of the High Desert's biggest attractions.

How will this project benefit the Twentynine Palms and High Desert economy?

The Nüwü Casino Resort & RV Park will deliver major benefits to the local economy through the creation of hundreds of new jobs directly, hundreds more indirectly, and millions of dollars in new revenue for local businesses working with the facility.

Phase I of the Tribe's project will include:

- Hundreds of new jobs at the casino-resort and RV park, offering excellent wages and benefits
- Exciting long-term career positions with many opportunities for advancement
- 401K, health insurance and other competitive benefits
- Millions of dollars in annual goods and services purchases from local businesses
- Millions of dollars in ancillary economic activity locally each year
- Hundreds of new jobs created by local businesses working with the facility
- Hiring preference and finest training available for Twentynine Palms residents
- A guaranteed revenue stream for city of Twentynine Palms for public services, community programs and more

Will the casino-resort have a local hiring preference?

The Twenty-Nine Palms Band will establish a hiring preference for local residents of Twentynine Palms and the High Desert.

The Tribe also will maintain similar preferences for local vendors seeking to supply goods and services to the casino-resort and RV park.

Do Indians pay taxes?

All residents of the United States, including Indians, must pay federal income tax. However, whether or not Indians are subject to California state income tax is more complicated.

California Indians do not pay state income tax if they are “eligible” Indians, live on a reservation or Indian trust allotment, and work on the reservation or trust allotment. If they live or work off the reservation or trust allotment Indians must pay state income tax.

Indians pay real property tax on property owned off a reservation or trust allotment, but do not pay property tax on land or buildings built on reservation or trust allotment land. However, if a tribe or individual Indian owns the land “in fee” the property is subject to taxation.

Indians are not subject to fees and licenses that apply to buildings or activities that occur on reservations or trust allotments. Indians are exempt from paying vehicle license fees by legislation signed by Governor Gray Davis in 1999 if vehicles are used primarily on reservation land.

Indians pay sales tax on sales off reservation and trust allotment land, but are exempt from paying sales tax on most sales on reservations.

For example, in 2002 alone, Native Americans paid \$4 billion in personal federal income taxes. In California, tribal government gaming generates more than \$400 million in federal, state and local taxes each year.

It is important to remember that under federal law, tribal government gaming cannot be taxed like a business. The tribal governments own the facilities.

Like the California lottery, which does not pay taxes on its revenues because it is owned by the state, Indian casinos don't pay taxes because tribal governments own them. Governments cannot tax other governments.

Don't casinos attract crime? What about the effects on property values?

Gaming opponents want people to think that there is a direct link between Indian gaming and increased crime. In fact, research shows that the social problems in communities with casinos are no different than those in communities without casinos.

A 2007 Massachusetts study by the Middleboro Casino Gambling Study Committee cited a U.S. Department of Justice report that examined the effects of casino gaming on towns found that crime did not rise as a result of a casino.

A study issued in 2000 by the General Accounting Office (GAO), the investigative arm of the U.S. Congress, found “no conclusive evidence on whether or not gambling caused increased social problems....”

A popular myth perpetuated by gambling opponents claims that the introduction of casinos causes a rise in street crime. However, recent studies refute this claim. Communities with casinos are just as safe as communities without casinos.

A 1997 study by Peter Reuter of the University of Maryland provided additional evidence refuting a causal linkage between crime and gaming. In his Report for the Greater Baltimore Committee, Reuter concluded the following: “In no case is there any evidence that casinos have had a major impact on the crime rates of towns or metropolitan areas in which they are located.”

In 2000, the Public Sector Gaming Study Commission reached similar conclusions, finding “no link between gambling, particularly casino-style gambling, and crime.” In fact, the 2000 report recognized that casinos are more of a crime deterrent than an instigator. According to the report, “The security on the premises of gambling facilities, the multiple layers of regulatory control, and the economic and social benefits that gambling seems to offer to communities are effective deterrents to criminal activity.”

In fact, a Harvard University study done in 2001 found rates of certain crimes actually fell in areas surrounding tribal casinos. Plus, the US Department of Justice has found no evidence of an organized crime element in the Indian gaming industry after years of investigation.

Statements by law enforcement agents in gaming jurisdictions across the country also refute critics' claims that gaming causes crime. Twenty-four sheriffs and chiefs of police submitted their findings to the National Gambling Impact Study Commission (NGISC), stating there was no connection between gaming and crime in their jurisdictions.

As for the issue of decreased property values, there is little documented evidence supporting the argument that casinos cause reductions in property values.

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Is the Indian gaming industry regulated?

“Nationwide, Tribal governments spent nearly \$340 million to regulate Indian gaming, including more than \$255 million on tribal regulation and \$70 million to state gaming regulatory agencies*.

Tribal government gaming is subject to more stringent regulation and security controls than any other type of gaming in the United States. The regulation of tribal gaming operations occurs at three distinct levels of government -- tribal, state and federal -- and includes oversight from the National Indian Gaming Commission and other federal agencies such as the U.S. Justice Department, the FBI, the IRS and the Bureau of Indian Affairs.

Tribal regulators are experienced law enforcement officers and professionals, such as former FBI agents, state SWAT team members, tribal police, and state regulators. Overall, there are some 3,350 tribal gaming regulators in force today.

Compacts between states and tribes give states some regulatory power over tribal government gaming, though IGRA recognizes that the federal government has primary responsibility for government-to-government relations with sovereign Indian nations.

Doesn't Indian gaming contribute to problem gambling?

Tribes thoroughly train their gaming employees to recognize the signs of compulsive or problem gambling and provide ongoing support to clientele, as well as to organizations offering assistance to problem gamblers and their loved ones. Overall, tribes throughout the country give tens of millions of dollars annually to problem gambling programs.

While some people assume that gambling disorders will increase if there is an expansion of gambling, the research indicates that this is not true. With commercial and Native American casinos operating in approximately 30 states, gambling participation rates doubling and consumer spending exceeding \$40 billion annually, the National Gambling Impact Study Commission (NGISC) in 1999 determined that the 0.6 percent of pathological gamblers has remained the same.

Additionally, the National Opinion Research Center of the University of Chicago completed the first-ever national (U.S.) survey on problem gambling prevalence in 1999. The study found that approximately 0.9 percent of the population exhibited problem gambling behavior.

Don't Indian casinos have a negative impact on the environment?

Tribes must comply with National Environmental Policy Act guidelines when building and operating their facilities. They must submit comprehensive and exhaustive studies and documentation examining all environmental elements, including traffic, water, wastewater, wetlands, waterways, cultural resources, coastal zones, endangered species, environmental justice and socioeconomic conditions, that could be affected by the proposed facility.

In California, compacts negotiated and signed since 2003 also call for strict adherence to California Environmental Quality Act guidelines with the construction of any new gaming facility.

Tribes work diligently to minimize any and all foreseeable impacts. In an effort to be good neighbors, the vast majority of tribes goes directly to local communities and listens to their concerns and opinions before embarking on any course of action.

Why gaming? Why can't tribes try some other business?

Tribes have explored a lot of different economic development strategies over the years, but none of them comes close to the benefits afforded by Indian gaming. The truth is many tribes are located in remote and desolate areas, away from major urban centers. Without a solid, market-tested business plan, tribes cannot attract the kind of outside investment they need.

Tribes need economic development to generate revenue to care for their people. Tribal government gaming allows tribes to provide services their people need, including housing, healthcare, educational and vocational opportunities, and proper care for elders, while giving them the ability to preserve and protect their history, culture and traditions for future generations.

There is little chance tribes could attract serious investment to build something like mini-marts or gas stations. While those businesses are fine, Indian gaming offers long-term job growth, revenue generation and immediate benefit to the local and regional economy. It is a rapidly growing industry and will continue to grow in the future. Investors are always looking for industries and businesses with this kind of long-term growth.

** - Source: National Indian Gaming Association*

