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U.S DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
BUREAU OF INDIAN AFFAIRS

PUBLIC MEETING
COQUILLE INDIAN TRIBE FEE-TO-TRUST
AND GAMING FACILITY PROJECT
DECEMBER 15, 2022

BALINDA DUNLAP, CSR 10710, RPR, CRR, RMR
488809



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PUBLIC MEETING
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REPORTER: BALINDA DUNLAP, CSR 10710, RPR, CRR, RMR

1 REMOTE VIA ZOOM, DECEMBER 15, 2022

2 ---o0o---

3 MR. HAUG: Good evening. The Bureau of
4 Indian Affairs welcomes you to this public hearing
5 for the draft environmental impact statement, or
6 DEIS, prepared for the Coquille Indian Tribe
7 fee-to-trust and gaming facility project in the
8 City of Medford, Oregon.

9 My name is Brian Haug. I am the regional
10 scientist for the Northwest Regional Office of the
11 Bureau of Indian Affairs, Division of Environmental
12 & Cultural Resource Management, or DECRM, based in
13 Portland, Oregon. The Bureau of Indian Affairs, or
14 BIA for short, is the primary federal agency
15 charged with carrying out the United States trust
16 responsibility to American Indian and Alaska Native
17 peoples and also maintaining the federal
18 government-to-government relationship with
19 federally-recognized tribes.

20 Other BIA participants present at this
21 evening's hearing include DECRM's team of Tobiah
22 Mogavero, National Environmental Policy Act, NEPA,
23 coordinator; Alexander Sheroki, environmental
24 protection specialist; Eirik Thorsgard, regional
25 archaeologist; and the BIA EIS consultants, Acorn

1 Environmental.

2 Please note, this hearing is also being
3 presented with closed captioning for the
4 hearing-impaired. To activate this feature, please
5 click your mouse on the closed captioning icon at
6 the bottom of your screen.

7 The purpose of tonight's hearing is to
8 facilitate public review and comments on the draft
9 EIS for the proposed fee-to-trust acquisition of a
10 2.4-acre parcel in the City of Medford and the
11 subsequent proposed operation of a gaming facility
12 on the same parcel by the Coquille Indian Tribe.

13 If the BIA approves the fee-to-trust
14 acquisition, it will hold the property in trust for
15 the tribe, allowing for the development of a gaming
16 facility on the site.

17 As part of this acquisition, the National
18 Environmental Policy Act, also known as NEPA,
19 requires that the BIA conduct environmental
20 compliance review before deciding whether to accept
21 land into trust.

22 The DEIS has been prepared as an
23 immediate -- intermediate step in this
24 environmental review process. BIA published the
25 draft EIS on November 25th, 2022, along with a

1 notice of availability, NOA, then announced a
2 45-day public review period.

3 In response to several requests, the
4 comment period for the DEIS is being extended by
5 the BIA for an additional 45 days and will now
6 close on February 23rd, 2023.

7 The BIA will also hold a second public
8 hearing on January 31st, 2023. It should be noted
9 that the BIA will not be presenting any new or
10 updated information in the second hearing beyond
11 the topics covered in tonight's hearing, so there's
12 no need for individuals to attend both meetings.

13 Additional information regarding the
14 extended review period and second hearing can be
15 found on the project website, which is
16 www.coquille-eis.com.

17 The purpose of tonight's hearing is to
18 facilitate public review and comments on the draft
19 EIS. We will consider all comments received during
20 the public comment period; and then we will publish
21 a final EIS, FEIS, which will include responses to
22 all substantive comments.

23 If you'd like to provide a spoken comment
24 at the hearing tonight, please use the Zoom "Raise
25 Hand" function. To raise your hand, click the

1 "Raise Hand" symbol at the bottom of your screen
2 or, if you're joining by phone, enter star 9. This
3 will place you in line to speak.

4 We will take speakers in the order that
5 their hands are raised. When it is your turn to
6 speak, we'll call your name and unmute your
7 connection so you can give your comment. Everyone
8 will be given three minutes to make their remarks
9 to ensure everyone has the opportunity to speak.
10 Please remember to select star 9 again once you
11 have spoken, and this will lower your raised hand.

12 Please note, a public hearing is not the
13 best forum for lengthy comments due to the time
14 constraints. If you have a lengthy comment, we
15 encourage you to submit a written letter.

16 All comments will receive equal weight
17 whether they are spoken or written. We have a
18 stenographer here that will record your spoken
19 comments word for word so they can be considered
20 fully as comments on the official record.

21 Please understand that the purpose of
22 tonight's hearing is to not have -- is to not have
23 a question-and-answer session or a debate of any
24 kind. We will not respond to questions or engage
25 in debate. Instead, we are here to listen and to

1 document your comments.

2 Now we have asked our EIS consultants,
3 Acorn Environmental, to provide you with a brief
4 presentation on the proposed action, its purpose
5 and need and the alternatives analyzed in the EIS
6 and the EIS process.

7 MS. MINER: Thank you. And good evening.
8 As noted by Mr. Haug, we will be going over the
9 purpose of this public hearing and giving an
10 overview of the process under the National
11 Environmental Protection Act, commonly known as
12 NEPA; the proposed action and alternatives; the
13 environmental impacts identified in the draft EIS,
14 and the next steps in the NEPA process. Finally,
15 we will address how to make comments on the draft
16 EIS.

17 The purpose of the hearing tonight is to
18 obtain public comments and feedback on the draft
19 environmental impact statement, also known as a
20 draft EIS, prepared for the Coquille Indian Tribe
21 fee-to-trust and gaming facility project, which
22 will be referred to as the "proposed project"
23 during this presentation.

24 It should be noted that public feedback
25 and input is an integral part of the NEPA process,

1 which will be explained in later detail in the
2 presentation.

3 However, first some detail on the proposed
4 background and the proposed project.

5 NEPA requires federal agencies to take
6 into account the environmental impacts of federal
7 actions and resulting projects prior to their
8 implementation. Environmental impact statements,
9 which can be abbreviated to EIS, are required for
10 major federal actions that have a potential to
11 significantly impact the quality of the
12 environment.

13 In this case, the Coquille tribe has
14 submitted an application to the BIA requesting that
15 the Department of the Interior take approximately
16 2.4 acres located in the City of Medford into
17 federal trust for gaming purposes in accordance
18 with the Indian Gaming Regulatory Act. This is a
19 proposed action being considered by the BIA.

20 Once the property is in trust, the tribe
21 proposes to remodel the existing bowling alley on
22 the proposed trust property into a gaming facility.
23 The tribe will also develop parcels to the north
24 that they own in fee for surface parking.

25 The federal purpose and need for the

1 proposed action is to facilitate tribal
2 self-sufficiency, self-determination and economic
3 development to satisfy both the BIA's
4 land-acquisition policy and the principal goals of
5 the Indian Gaming Regulatory Act.

6 This slide illustrates the key parts in
7 the NEPA process. Scoping is the first step of the
8 process and is considered the information-gathering
9 stage. The scoping process is initiated with a
10 release of a notice of intent, or NOI. During the
11 scoping stage, input that is related to the
12 project, alternatives and environmental analysis is
13 obtained from the public and agencies.

14 After the scoping period ends, a draft EIS
15 is prepared based on the information obtained and
16 is then released for public review and comment.
17 Comments obtained during this review period are
18 considered and responded to in the final EIS. This
19 final EIS is released to the public during a 30-day
20 waiting period prior to the release and decision on
21 the project, which is summarized in a record of
22 decision, or a ROD. The ROD marks the end of the
23 NEPA process.

24 The NOI that began the scoping process was
25 published on January 15th, 2015. The scoping

1 period itself lasted from January 15th to March
2 19th, 2015. During that period, a scoping comment
3 public hearing was held on February 23rd, 2015.
4 Afterwards, a scoping report that summarized the
5 comments received during the scoping comment period
6 and the project alternatives was published in June
7 2015.

8 The draft EIS was released on November
9 25th, 2022, with the extended comment period for
10 this document closing on February 23rd, 2023. The
11 final EIS will be available for viewing during the
12 minimum waiting period of 30 days. Then, at least
13 30 days after publication of the final EIS, the BIA
14 will issue a record of decision.

15 Now, we will see an overview of the draft
16 EIS itself. As seen on this slide, the components
17 of the draft EIS are organized into eight chapters
18 with an additional section for the executive
19 summary, which is not shown on this slide. An
20 overview of the proposed project and the
21 alternatives to the proposed project will be shown
22 on the following slides.

23 This map shows the location of the
24 proposed project that is known as the Medford site,
25 which the site is located in the lower right-hand

1 corner of this map. The Medford site is located
2 within the incorporated boundaries of the City of
3 Medford, adjacent to the northeastern boundary of
4 Oregon State Highway 99, also known as South
5 Pacific Highway and South Riverside Avenue.

6 In addition, the map shows the locations
7 of the two other alternative sites: the
8 approximately 49.34-acre property known as the
9 Phoenix site that is in the same corner as the
10 Medford site, and the location of the existing Mill
11 Casino, which is located in the upper left-hand
12 corner.

13 The Phoenix site is located off North
14 Phoenix Road northeast of the City of Phoenix in
15 Jackson County; and the existing Mill Casino is
16 located at 3201 Tremont Street in the City of North
17 Bend, Coos County.

18 This figure is a zoomed-in map of the
19 Medford site and Phoenix site, which can be seen in
20 closer detail now.

21 The Medford site is currently developed
22 with a bowling alley and two parking lots; and
23 nearby development mainly consists of commercial,
24 with the exception of single-family homes located
25 to the north of the site. The Medford site is

1 zoned for regional and heavy commercial
2 development.

3 The Phoenix site, on the other hand, is
4 zoned for exclusive farm use under the Jackson
5 County comprehensive plan; and it is also within
6 the Phoenix-5 urban reserve area of the Greater
7 Bear Creek Valley RPS plan.

8 This slide shows the alternatives examined
9 in the draft EIS. There are four alternatives in
10 total, which will be described in sequential order
11 starting with Alternative A.

12 Alternative A, the proposed project,
13 includes the before-mentioned transfer of 2.4 acres
14 of land into trust. It also includes retrofitting
15 and remodeling the existing Roxy Ann Lanes bowling
16 alley into an approximately 30,300-square-foot
17 gaming facility, which is approximately 7,000
18 square feet larger than the existing bowling alley.
19 A bar/deli and support services would be included
20 in the gaming facility.

21 Potable water would continue to be
22 provided by the Medford Water Commission; and the
23 tribe would continue to pay water service fees,
24 including paying for upgrades if necessary.
25 Similarly, wastewater treatment and disposal would

1 be provided by the current wastewater-collection
2 system serving the Medford site, Rogue Valley Sewer
3 Services.

4 The City of Medford would continue to
5 provide law enforcement and fire-protection
6 services to the Medford site, with the tribe
7 intending to work with the City of Medford to enter
8 an agreement for the provision of these services
9 and appropriate compensation.

10 During construction, it is anticipated
11 that approximately 183 onetime employment
12 opportunities would be generated. And when the
13 project is operational, it is anticipated to
14 require 229 employees.

15 This figure shows the site plan for the
16 proposed project. The approximately 7-acre Medford
17 site is shown with a red border, and the 2.4-acre
18 portion of the Medford site that is proposed to be
19 taken into trust is shown with a yellow dashed
20 border. The existing bowling alley proposed to be
21 renovated into a gaming facility is located on the
22 2.4-acre proposed trust parcel.

23 Additionally, at least 520 surface parking
24 spaces would be established on the 2.4-acre trust
25 property with additional parking developed on the

1 remaining 4.8 acres of the Medford site that will
2 not be taken into federal trust.

3 This figure shows an architectural
4 rendering of the renovated bowling alley that will
5 be used for a gaming facility under the proposed
6 project.

7 Alternative B, the Phoenix site, is
8 similar to Alternative A, including the size of the
9 gaming facility. However, more land would be
10 transferred into trust, and the gaming facility
11 would be constructed as a new facility within an
12 approximately 7.8-acre area within the 49.34-acre
13 Phoenix site.

14 Potable water would be provided from the
15 City of Phoenix through an extension of the City's
16 facilities that would include a new booster pump.
17 Wastewater services would be provided by the same
18 provider as Alternative A, but it will require an
19 extension of a 12-inch sewer main north of Fern
20 Valley-Interstate 5 interchange along North Phoenix
21 Road. The City of Phoenix would provide law
22 enforcement and fire-protection services under
23 Alternative B.

24 Alternative B is projected to create a
25 total of 206 onetime construction-related jobs,

1 which is higher than Alternative A due to the
2 construction of a new facility. The new employment
3 opportunities during operation would be very
4 similar to Alternative A due to the facility being
5 the same size.

6 This figure shows the site plan for
7 Alternative B. As shown here, the gaming facility
8 and parking development would occur in the eastern
9 portion of the Phoenix site. The proposed
10 extensions to the existing water and wastewater
11 facilities are shown as dashed blue and purple
12 lines respectively.

13 The last alternative with development,
14 Alternative C, expansion of the Mill Casino,
15 consists of expanding the tribe's existing Mill
16 Casino by approximately 5,000 square feet on the
17 10.95-acre Mill Casino site. Unlike the other two
18 alternatives discussed, a fee-to-trust acquisition
19 would not be necessary for Alternative C because
20 the Mill Casino is on land that is already in
21 federal trust for the tribe and is authorized for
22 gaming under the Indian Gaming Regulatory Act as
23 restored lands.

24 Water and wastewater services would
25 continue to be provided by Coos Bay-North Bend

1 Water Board and City of North Bend respectively.
2 Law enforcement and fire-protection services would
3 continue to be provided by the City of North Bend.

4 New operational employment opportunities
5 would be approximately 84 in total, which is less
6 than the other alternatives.

7 This figure shows the site plan for
8 Alternative C. The shaded corner towards the
9 center to the right is where the proposed expansion
10 would occur.

11 With the last alternative, Alternative D,
12 no action/no development, no land will be taken
13 into trust for the benefit of the tribe and no
14 change in the current land use of the alternative
15 site locations would occur. Consequently, none of
16 the adverse or beneficial effects identified under
17 the other project alternatives would be anticipated
18 to occur.

19 With an overview of the project
20 alternatives done, we shall review the
21 environmental topics analyzed within the draft EIS
22 for each alternative. The draft EIS provides a
23 description of both the affected environment and
24 the environmental consequences associated with the
25 issue areas shown on the slide that may occur as a

1 result of the alternatives.

2 The draft EIS identifies a number of best
3 management practices and mitigation measures to
4 avoid or reduce the potential adverse environmental
5 effects resulting from the alternatives.

6 For the sake of brevity, this presentation
7 only summarizes mitigation measures identified for
8 Alternative A. For a full description of the
9 mitigation measures, please refer to Section 5 of
10 the draft EIS.

11 To prevent impacts associated with soil
12 erosion and water quality, the tribe would comply
13 with the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination
14 System General Construction Permit requirements.
15 This includes the preparation of a stormwater
16 pollution prevention plan, which would require that
17 best management practices are implemented during
18 construction, such as the use of hay wattles and
19 covering stockpiles, to prevent siltation and
20 contamination of runoff.

21 To further prevent potential effects to
22 water resources, the tribe will use low-impact
23 development measures for operational stormwater
24 conveyance, retention and treatment, including the
25 installation of either vegetated bioretention

1 swales or a distributed pervious strip system
2 throughout the site, and will minimize water usage.

3 Air-quality effects would be reduced
4 through the implementation of
5 fugitive-dust-prevention measures during
6 construction and other measures to reduce
7 air-pollutant and greenhouse-gas emissions, such as
8 limiting equipment and vehicle idling time,
9 encouraging employee and patron rideshare programs
10 and using energy-efficient lighting, air and
11 heating systems.

12 Biological-resource impacts would be
13 similarly reduced with the National Pollutant
14 Discharge Elimination System General Construction
15 Permit.

16 Additionally, while the project site is
17 heavily disturbed, ornamental trees and shrubs in
18 the area do provide suitable nesting sites for
19 migratory birds. Therefore, the draft EIS requires
20 that preconstruction surveys be conducted for
21 nesting migratory birds and, if found, avoided.

22 While there are no known cultural
23 resources within the project site, the draft EIS
24 recommends monitoring by a qualified archeologist
25 during earth-moving activities. In the event of an

1 inadvertent discovery, work would stop and the
2 appropriate agency and tribe would be notified.

3 Related to socioeconomic, while most
4 economic and fiscal impacts were determined to be
5 positive, the tribe will implement policies to help
6 problem gamblers in accordance with State compact
7 requirements.

8 Several traffic-mitigation measures are
9 proposed to reduce traffic-related impacts when the
10 project is operational and in the cumulative year
11 of 2042. As can be seen on the slide, the
12 improvements would primarily occur along Highway 99
13 and would include paying a fair-share contribution
14 for certain roadway segments, such as the segment
15 between South Pacific Highway and Garfield Street.

16 To prevent conflicts with surrounding land
17 uses, the proposed project will install light
18 fixtures so that they would not shed light off of
19 the Medford site and signage will be designed to be
20 compatible with the buildings.

21 In addition, the tribe will implement best
22 management practices and mitigation measures to
23 reduce noise and traffic impacts that may affect
24 surrounding land uses.

25 Measures to reduce potential impacts to

1 public services primarily consist of reducing
2 impacts to law enforcement and fire
3 protection-services. Mitigation measures include
4 installing sufficient lighting and making annual
5 payments to the City of Medford Police and Fire
6 Departments.

7 In addition, a mitigation measure would
8 ensure that waste generated from the proposed
9 project would be recycled to the extent feasible in
10 addition to utilizing environmentally-preferable
11 materials.

12 Noise generated during the construction
13 operation could disturb nearby sensitive receptors;
14 and, therefore, mitigation measures are proposed in
15 both phases of the proposed project.

16 Construction-noise-reduction measures include
17 limiting construction hours and enclosing all
18 diesel generator sites with enclosures.

19 Operational noise would be reduced through
20 shielding heating, ventilation and air-condition
21 systems and mounting them on roofs.

22 Measures to reduce the potential for
23 impacts associated with hazardous materials include
24 following best management practices for filling and
25 servicing construction equipment and vehicles,

1 using hazardous materials in accordance with
2 applicable regulatory agency protocols and
3 implementing a series of procedures if contaminated
4 soil is discovered.

5 These procedures include stopping work,
6 following U.S. EPA guidance on sampling and
7 remediation and construction personnel wearing
8 personal protective equipment and following proper
9 decontamination procedures.

10 Finally, best management practices to
11 address potential effects associated with
12 aesthetics and the introduction of additional
13 lighting include placement of lights on buildings
14 so as not to cast light or glare offsite; use of
15 shielding for all outdoor lighting so as to ensure
16 it is downcast; use of timers to limit lighting to
17 necessary times and insulation of nonreflective,
18 low-glare glass on all exterior glass.

19 A hard-copy version of the draft EIS can
20 be reviewed at the Medford branch library of
21 Jackson County Library Services, located at 205
22 South Central Avenue, Medford, Oregon 97501. A
23 digital copy can be reviewed and downloaded from
24 the project website at www.coquille-eis.com.

25 All comments on the draft EIS are due to

1 the BIA by February 23rd, 2023. After the public
2 review and comment period on the draft EIS is
3 closed, the BIA will prepare a final EIS that will
4 include responses to the comments received and
5 revisions to the draft EIS. The final EIS will be
6 made available to the public for review in a
7 similar manner as the draft EIS.

8 At least 30 days after publication of the
9 final EIS, the BIA will issue a ROD. This ROD will
10 both mark the end of the NEPA process and specify
11 the decision on whether or not to approve the
12 proposed action.

13 Written comments on the draft EIS can be
14 mailed or hand-delivered to the Bureau of Indian
15 Affairs Northwest Regional Office, whose address is
16 shown on this slide, or you can email comments to
17 coquillecasinoeis@bia.gov. When submitting written
18 comments, please include "DEIS Comments, Coquille
19 Tribe Medford Gaming Facility Project" in the email
20 subject line or at the top of a written comment
21 letter.

22 For further information on anything
23 mentioned in the presentation today and more, you
24 can contact Mr. Brian Haug with the BIA Northwest
25 Regional Office via phone or email.

1 This slide concludes the presentation.

2 MODERATOR: At this time, we invite
3 participants wishing to provide comment to raise
4 their hand by selecting the "Raise Hand" icon on
5 the lower right-hand of your screen if you are
6 joining by computer or by pressing star 9 if you
7 are joining by phone.

8 When it is your turn to speak, I will call
9 you by your screen name or the last four digits of
10 your phone number. At that time, please unmute
11 yourself by clicking the microphone icon at the
12 bottom of the screen or by pressing star 6 if you
13 are joining by phone.

14 Once you are unmuted, state your name for
15 the record and then state your comment or question
16 for up to three minutes.

17 When your time is finished, I will lower
18 your hand and mute you again.

19 If you have trouble with your audio or
20 microphone, please call (949) 861-5954 for
21 technical assistance.

22 Some reminders when making your comments:
23 Please speak as clearly as possible when making
24 your comment or question so that the stenographer
25 can record your comment as accurately as possible.

1 Summarize your main points and be as specific as
2 you can. If you are joining by phone and computer,
3 please mute your computer speakers to avoid audio
4 feedback.

5 The first speaker will be Chairman Brenda
6 Meade of the Coquille Indian Tribe, and then we
7 will call speakers in the order they raise their
8 hands.

9 MS. MEADE: Hello. Can you hear me okay?

10 MODERATOR: Yes.

11 MS. MEADE: Great. Thank you.

12 I just first want to say (speaking tribal
13 language) greetings, friends. My name is Brenda
14 Meade, and I am chairman of the Coquille Indian
15 Tribe. And I am pleased that we are finally here
16 tonight, reaching another milestone in the federal
17 process on a road that has taken over ten years for
18 our federal trustees to begin the process promised
19 under federal law and regulations for us to place a
20 mere 2.42 acres of land into trust here in our
21 community in Medford.

22 We are here tonight because the United
23 States Department of Interior is considering my
24 tribe's application to place 2.42 acres of land in
25 trust in Medford, Oregon for the Coquille Indian

1 Tribe.

2 Our goal has been to open a new venue
3 which will add to our exciting entertainment campus
4 in South Medford, creating jobs, entertainment
5 choices for our community and an investment that
6 will benefit all Jackson County residents.

7 A statute called the National
8 Environmental Policy Act, or NEPA, applies to most
9 federal agency decisions. NEPA is a procedural law
10 that directs federal agencies to assess the
11 environmental impacts of their decisions. In some
12 cases, the NEPA also directs agencies to analyze
13 alternatives to a proposed action.

14 For the Coquille Tribe's application, the
15 U.S. Department of Interior has complied with NEPA
16 by preparing a draft environmental impact study, or
17 DEIS. The DEIS includes several studies prepared
18 by specialists in a variety of subject-matter
19 fields. The DEIS also analyzes alternatives to the
20 proposed gaming facility and satisfies other NEPA
21 requirements.

22 Today's hearing is an opportunity to
23 provide input on the information included in the
24 DEIS, including its supporting studies. This is
25 not supposed to be a forum about opinions of

1 gaming, competition in the market or liking or not
2 liking the form of entertainment we are applying
3 for. The DEIS has a specific list of impacts that
4 will be evaluated as part of this process.

5 We hope to hear comments based on data,
6 research and accurate facts so that together we can
7 develop a project that benefits both the Medford
8 and Jackson County community and the Coquille
9 Tribe.

10 I know that Jackson County, Medford and
11 the Coquille people win by having the Coquille
12 Tribe invest in business growth here and keep the
13 dollars in our community in Medford. I firmly
14 believe that it is better to keep jobs and revenues
15 here locally rather than exporting them out to
16 other places. For Medford and the Coquille Tribe,
17 the path to prosperity lies within our own
18 community here.

19 The Coquille Tribe knows there are
20 opponents out there who are working to delay this
21 project and deny our community and the tribe our
22 rights under the law. They fear competition. They
23 fear losing power. These are not the cultural
24 value of our people. Our project and, as a result,
25 our community, has suffered delays, unanswered

1 questions and questionable political tactics from
2 the start.

3 We ask that the law be followed and the
4 NEPA process move forward without improper
5 influence.

6 Our opponents try to sound altruistic, but
7 keeping competition out of our community is never
8 beneficial for the consumer. This does not reflect
9 the values of the tribe or the Medford community.

10 We the Coquille, Medford and Jackson
11 County value each other; and we invest in each
12 other so that our families who live and work here
13 succeed together. We look forward to hearing from
14 each of you.

15 Again, thank you all for your time and
16 attention. (Speaking tribal language.)

17 MODERATOR: Thank you.

18 The next speaker is Terry Hansen. Please
19 unmute yourself.

20 MS. HANSEN: Hi. Can you hear me?

21 MODERATOR: Yes, I can. Please provide
22 your comments.

23 MS. HANSEN: Thank you so much for
24 allowing me to speak. My name is Terry Hansen, as
25 you said, and I am opposed to the Coquille's

1 building of a Medford casino. I am a resident of
2 Jackson County, Oregon. I was born here in a house
3 that my grandfather built, and so this area is very
4 near and dear to my heart. And I appreciate you
5 giving me the time to express my opinion.

6 One of the reasons I oppose this casino
7 being built is because the initial notice of intent
8 for this casino was published in 2015. The
9 Coquille Indian Tribe has made significant changes
10 to the project since then, and the scope of the
11 project has changed. The scope of the DEIS should
12 be changed to reflect the entire development that
13 they intend to build.

14 Another reason I oppose this casino being
15 built is because the State of Oregon has already
16 established a "one tribe, one casino" agreement
17 with the nine federally-recognized tribes in
18 Oregon.

19 I also oppose this casino being built
20 because I feel the information in the DEIS is
21 outdated. Many of the reports are from 2016, and
22 there has been very little done to update these
23 reports. All of the reports should be updated, as
24 there have been many changes in the world in the
25 last six years.

1 In closing, I ask that you reject this
2 proposal. Thank you.

3 MODERATOR: Thank you.

4 The next speaker is Michael Rondeau.
5 Please unmute yourself.

6 MR. RONDEAU: Thank you.

7 My name is Michael Rondeau. I am the CEO
8 for the Cow Creek Band of Umpqua Tribe of Indians.

9 And first of all, thank you for granting
10 the additional hearing in January and extending the
11 comment period.

12 I'd like to start out with, like so many
13 tribes, we struggle to meet our budgets. We don't
14 have a tax base; therefore, we rely on gaming
15 revenues to provide business, diversification and
16 essential services to our membership. The proposed
17 casino will cripple our ability to take care of our
18 own people, putting a burden on public services.

19 If approved and the doors open, this will
20 open the floodgates for additional casinos in the
21 state by this one tribe. The other tribes do not
22 enjoy that ability to open up second casinos.

23 The casino is 150 miles from their
24 reservation. The authors of the Coquille
25 Restoration Act, which they're using to justify

1 this, have produced a legislative history that
2 declare that this was never the intent when it was
3 passed.

4 I thank you for allowing me to provide
5 these comments. We'll be making additional, more
6 substantive comments written. Thank you.

7 MODERATOR: Thank you for your comment.

8 The next speaker is Carla Keene. Please
9 unmute yourself.

10 MS. KEENE: Hi. Can you hear me okay?

11 MODERATOR: Yes, I can.

12 MS. KEENE: Great. Thank you.

13 My name is Carla Keene, and I am the
14 chairman of the Tribe Board of Directors of the Cow
15 Creek Band of Umpqua Tribe of Indians.

16 In the interest of time and to ensure that
17 everyone has a chance to comment, I will keep my
18 comments brief. We will be submitting substantial
19 written comments in addition to the comments that
20 you will hear here -- that you will hear tonight.

21 For tonight, I want to emphasize the
22 profound impact Coquille's second casino would have
23 on my tribe and my people. The DEIS contains a
24 very conservative estimate of the potential
25 economic impact on our Seven Feathers. It

1 estimates revenue will decrease by 25 percent. It
2 also estimates it will take 16 years for revenue
3 levels to return to normal. We fear that potential
4 impact will be even greater than these estimates.

5 The DEIS dismisses this impact, stating
6 that increasing competition is not a significant
7 impact. However, Seven Feathers is our primary
8 source of governmental revenue. Decreasing the
9 revenue by 25 percent will result in impacts that
10 go beyond merely economic impacts. It will impact
11 essential governmental services that the tribe
12 provides. It will impact our education programs.
13 It will impact our ability to provide health care
14 and social services that many of our members rely
15 upon. It will impact our ability to provide
16 employment opportunities to our members.

17 We invest greatly in our surrounding
18 communities. The Umpqua Indian Foundation and the
19 tribe has given over \$30 million in grants in the
20 counties surrounding our tribe. We have devoted
21 significant funds towards the protection of the
22 environment and fisheries' work in order to protect
23 the wild fish runs.

24 All of these programs and efforts are at
25 risk with potential massive reductions in

1 governmental revenue. The survival of our people,
2 their health and welfare are at stake.

3 Accordingly, we respectfully request that
4 the BIA take these very real human and
5 environmental impacts into consideration when
6 analyzing the proposed action.

7 Thank you.

8 MODERATOR: Thank you.

9 The next speaker is Crystal Ansures.
10 Please unmute yourself.

11 MS. ANSURES: Hi. Can you hear me?

12 MODERATOR: Yes, we can.

13 MS. ANSURES: My name is Crystal Ansures.

14 I am opposed to the Coquille Indian Tribe's
15 building of a Medford casino. I am a resident of
16 Jackson County, Oregon. Thank you for giving me
17 the opportunity to express my opinion in this
18 matter.

19 The DEIS claims that the casino will not
20 result in unacceptable traffic operations and
21 states that no mitigation is necessary. I feel
22 that the DEIS is underestimating the impact that a
23 casino would have on the traffic in Medford, and I
24 think there will be significant impacts. The
25 traffic-impact analysis drafted in 2019 needs to be

1 updated beyond the two-page update that focuses
2 only on the hotel.

3 I also feel that the DEIS is
4 underestimating the impact that a casino will have
5 on crime. The Mill Casino generates the most
6 police calls for any one location in North Bend,
7 with an average of 640 calls annually. A casino in
8 Medford will significantly increase the rate of
9 crime.

10 The DEIS calls for payments to the Medford
11 Police Department to mitigate the increasing crime,
12 but that doesn't account for the impact on local
13 residents. I think the DEIS dismisses the impacts
14 to residents as less than significant.

15 Our area has been through a lot in the
16 last few years. For me, essentially it comes down
17 to "one tribe, one casino," which the State of
18 Oregon has agreed to, and the fact that the
19 Coquille Indian Tribe has no ancestral ties to this
20 area.

21 Finally, I urge you to closely evaluate
22 the concerns raised by the local community and
23 ultimately reject this proposal. Sincerely, thank
24 you, Crystal.

25 MODERATOR: Thank you for your comment.

1 The next speaker is Heather Vick. Please
2 unmute yourself.

3 MS. VICK: Hi. My name is Heather. I am
4 opposed to the Coquille Indian Tribe's building of
5 a Medford casino. I am a resident of Jackson
6 County, Oregon, and thank you for giving me the
7 opportunity to express my opinion in this matter.

8 In my opinion, the BIA should try to
9 encourage public participation. The timing of this
10 being published does not leave the average person
11 enough time to read the 2,000-page DEIS and prepare
12 comments for this meeting. In the future, when the
13 BIA sets the schedule for reviewing this project,
14 it should provide the public with more time.

15 The DEIS estimates that the Coquille
16 casino will decrease the governmental revenue of
17 the Cow Creek Tribe by 25 percent. This will
18 negatively impact the tribe and its people by
19 forcing the tribe to substantially decrease the
20 services it provides.

21 My tribe provides educational, health
22 care, social services, elder-care programs and
23 employment opportunities to its membership. All of
24 these programs are now at risk. The impact to the
25 tribe and its people cannot be understated.

1 The Cow Creek Umpqua Tribe is just one of
2 the many tribes that would be affected by the
3 building of this casino in Medford. The Coquille's
4 second casino has the potential to negatively
5 impact a huge population of tribal people.

6 The Coquille Tribe does not have any
7 ancestral ties to the Medford area. Allowing the
8 Coquille Tribe to build a casino 180 miles from its
9 reservation is an -- is -- in an area where it does
10 not have any ancestral ties unfairly benefits the
11 Coquille to the detriment of other tribes in the
12 area that do have ancestral ties.

13 Please take the local community and their
14 concerns seriously, as I am voicing -- as I am in
15 voicing my opinion and asking you to reject the
16 casino proposal. Thank you.

17 MODERATOR: Thank you for your comments.

18 The next speaker is Dan Courtney. Please
19 unmute yourself.

20 MR. COURTNEY: Can you hear me okay?

21 MODERATOR: Yes.

22 MR. COURTNEY: Okay.

23 My name is Dan Courtney. I serve on the
24 Tribal Board of Directors for the Cow Creek Band of
25 Umpqua Tribe of Indians.

1 The DEIS fails to consider the legality of
2 the Coquille's proposal. Coquille's second casino
3 should be subject to the two-part determination
4 process under IGRA. The two-part determination
5 process requires consultation with state and local
6 officials, including other nearby Indian tribes; a
7 determination that the gaming establishment will be
8 in the best interest of the surrounding community
9 and approval from the Governor.

10 Coquille seeks to avoid this process,
11 arguing that the restored lands exception applies
12 to their application. However, Coquille's
13 interpretation of IGRA is contrary to the purpose
14 of the restored lands exception. The restored
15 lands exception was not intended to advantage one
16 tribe to the detriment of other tribes. It was
17 intended to place tribes in an equal position to
18 other tribes.

19 If the proposed action goes forward, it
20 will mean that Coquille has the authority to take
21 lands into trust for gaming purposes within any of
22 the five counties in their service area, including
23 Coos, Curry, Douglas, Jackson and Lane Counties.

24 If Coquille is allowed to use the restored
25 lands exception, it would set a dangerous

1 precedent, allowing the tribes to establish gaming
2 establishments far away from lands where they share
3 any geographic or historical connection.

4 If Coquille wishes to complete the
5 proposed action, it should be required to pursue
6 the two-part determination. This is the process
7 that all other tribes must go through. Ensuring
8 that Coquille completes the two-part determination
9 process will put Coquille on par with all the other
10 tribes, which is what Congress intended.

11 Thank you.

12 MODERATOR: Thank you for your comments.

13 The next speaker is Travis Mackie. Please
14 unmute yourself.

15 MR. MACKIE: Hello. Can you hear me?

16 MODERATOR: Yes, we can.

17 MR. MACKIE: Hi. My name is Travis
18 Mackie. I'm the fisheries biologist for the Cow
19 Creek Band of Umpqua Tribe of Indians.

20 There are many technical issues with the
21 DEIS. Today I wanted to highlight three issues
22 that are of particular concern to tribal fisheries.

23 First, the DEIS lists the wrong
24 evolutionary significant unit for the Medford and
25 Phoenix sites. The DEIS lists the Oregon Coast

1 coho. However, the relevant ESU is actually the
2 Southern Oregon/Northern California Coast coho.

3 Second, the DEIS overlooks a critical
4 habitat. The DEIS states that the closest critical
5 habitat to Medford site is located 4.5 miles north.
6 However, this is simply not true. Bear Creek is
7 considered critical habitat for SONCC coho and is
8 adjacent to the Medford site.

9 Finally, the DEIS describes Bear Creek as
10 "A potential anadromous bearing stream." However,
11 this is incorrect. Bear Creek is a well-known
12 anadromous bearing stream. Fall Chinook, summer
13 and winter steelhead, cutthroat trout and SONCC
14 coho, a species listed under their -- the
15 Endangered Species Act, are all present in Bear
16 Creek. This stream also has an essential salmonid
17 habitat designation. Describing Bear Creek as "A
18 potential anadromous bearing stream" is an attempt
19 to downplay the impacts of the proposed action.

20 Overall, there are multiple oversights in
21 the DEIS. Before any -- the final EIS is
22 published, the environmental analysis should be
23 carefully looked at, as it appears to us that the
24 analysis was rushed and full of multiple errors.

25 Thank you.

1 MODERATOR: Thank you for your comments.
2 The next speaker is Lily Morgan. Please
3 unmute yourself.

4 MS. MORGAN: Good evening. My name is
5 Lily Morgan. I am a State Representative for House
6 District 3 in Oregon. I am here to ask for support
7 of Alternative A as an option that will bring
8 economic development to our area.

9 This site is a site that has served the
10 Rogue Valley for many years in a capacity for large
11 groups and gatherings. I have attended the Roxy
12 Ann bowling, and there's been gaming in these areas
13 in the past. The parking lots are large enough to
14 handle large groups.

15 But most importantly, this is an area that
16 was deeply impacted by the wildfires and the urban
17 fires in 2020. And it's an area that is in
18 substantial need of urban renewal.

19 This area of Jackson County has fallen
20 into disrepair, and the economic boost of not only
21 restoring the area to a higher economic impact
22 would also provide jobs that would be essential to
23 our community. Recently my community lost 250
24 jobs.

25 Not all tribes are the same. We have some

1 tribes in Oregon of the nine federally-recognized
2 that are larger than the others. But the Coquille
3 Tribe reaches out to the entire Southwest Oregon
4 area and supports many events in our area and many
5 of our communities that are disadvantaged and in
6 need of help.

7 This area is in the service area of
8 Southern Oregon University as well, and the
9 opportunity for the youth of the Coquille Tribe to
10 have a connection to the university and open up
11 doors for their future is a great need.

12 The increase of jobs, both short-term and
13 long-term, will have a huge economic impact. It
14 will change the lives for generations. And I ask
15 you to support Alternate A this evening.

16 Thank you.

17 MODERATOR: Thank you.

18 The next speaker is Heather Bartlette.
19 Please unmute yourself.

20 MS. BARTLETTE: Hello. I am Heather
21 Bartlette. I'm the environmental specialist for
22 the Cow Creek Band of Umpqua Tribe of Indians.

23 As we will discuss in detail in our
24 written comments, the DEIS relies on outdated
25 information. Most of the environmental analysis,

1 studies and reports that the DEIS relies upon were
2 performed in 2015, seven years ago.

3 I wanted to address one example where the
4 outdated analysis impacts the quality of the
5 environmental analysis in the DEIS. There is a
6 history of pesticide use in the area surrounding
7 the proposed action.

8 On a nearby property, less than 500 feet
9 away from the site of the proposed action, high
10 levels of arsenic and lead concentrations were
11 detected in composite samples. This may be because
12 there are hot spots of those compounds in the soil
13 that exceed ecological screening values. In
14 addition, DDE and DDT were detected at
15 concentrations exceeding the most stringent
16 ecological screening values.

17 The DEIS recognizes that the proposed
18 action has been expanded from 2.4 acres to 7.2
19 acres. However, the DEIS relies upon an
20 environmental site assessment performed in 2012
21 with a supplemental investigation performed in
22 2015. In 2015 soil samples were taken only from
23 the 2.4-acre site. It does not appear that any
24 additional soil samples were taken on the other 4.8
25 acres. This would be important, particularly where

1 there is exposed soil.

2 If you do have representative samples --
3 if you do not have representative samples of your
4 entire site, then it is irresponsible to assume
5 that contaminants are not over the threshold.
6 Highly contaminated runoff can be generated by past
7 land uses where pollutant concentrations exceed
8 those typically found in stormwater.

9 If this happens, a bioswale would be
10 rendered ineffective. The slope of the property is
11 directed towards Bear Creek, which was listed as
12 needing the development of an arsenic TMDL.

13 The potential oversight or the lack of
14 analysis or sampling of the additional acres of
15 development that are connected to the proposed
16 action could result in significant impacts to the
17 environment that will never be studied if they are
18 not studied now.

19 Lead arsenate is moderately toxic to birds
20 and aquatic invertebrate species. New research
21 shows that arsenic bioaccumulates in the liver and
22 kidney of fish. When lead arsenate is exposed to
23 air from a disturbance of soil, it is highly toxic
24 to humans if inhaled and is a known cancer-causing
25 contaminant.

1 At the best interests of worker safety,
2 environmental health and fish and wildlife health,
3 the BIA should complete additional sampling of the
4 parcels not included in the 2015 supplemental
5 investigation. These samples should include
6 composite samples to order to help identify hot
7 spots on the property.

8 This is just one example of where the
9 reliance on outdated documents has negatively
10 impacted the DEIS. The BIA should require all of
11 the underlying reports to be updated in order to
12 ensure that the full environmental impact of the
13 proposed action is analyzed.

14 Thank you.

15 MODERATOR: Thank you for your comments.

16 The next speaker is Neal. Please unmute
17 yourself and state your full name for the record.

18 MS. JONES: Hello. My name is Vera Jones.

19 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Can you hear her
20 okay?

21 MODERATOR: Yes, we can.

22 MS. JONES: Okay. I am opposed to the
23 Coquilles building a casino in Medford. I have
24 been a resident of Jackson County, Oregon for over
25 ten years. I am also a member of the Cow Creek

1 Band of the Umpqua Tribe of Indians.

2 If the Coquille want to build another
3 casino to make more money, then I feel the DEIS
4 should analyze a reasonable range of nongaming
5 alternatives for them.

6 Currently the DEIS focuses solely on
7 gaming, and there are other ways for the Coquilles
8 to achieve their purpose of economic development
9 without having a negative impact on the other
10 tribes.

11 The DEIS should also consider whether this
12 proposal for a casino should be subject to the
13 two-part determination process. This would allow
14 the BIA to consider whether the casino would be in
15 the best interest of the surrounding community.

16 The traffic in Medford is already
17 congested, and crime is a major problem. It is
18 possible that a casino would only add to these
19 problems.

20 I oppose this casino being built because
21 the State of Oregon has already established a "one
22 tribe, one casino" agreement with the recognized
23 tribes in Oregon. If the Coquilles are allowed to
24 disregard this agreement, that would open the door
25 for other Oregon tribes to do the same.

1 In the long run, this will be harmful to
2 all involved, including the Coquilles. As you
3 consider this decision, I urge you to closely
4 evaluate the concerns raised by the local
5 community.

6 Thank you very much.

7 MODERATOR: Thank you for your comments.

8 The next speaker is Anthony Broadman.
9 Please unmute yourself.

10 MR. BROADMAN: Good evening. I am Anthony
11 Broadman. I am general counsel for the Cow Creek
12 Band of Umpqua Tribe of Indians.

13 This proposed action would violate the
14 Indian Gaming Regulatory Act, and the failure of
15 the DEIS to consider that illegality of this
16 project means that the DEIS itself is irreparably
17 flawed.

18 As Interior is aware, for Coquille to be
19 able to take advantage of the restored lands
20 exception, Coquille's Restoration Act itself would
21 need to allow or authorize Interior to take land
22 into trust in Medford. But the Coquille
23 Restoration Act doesn't do that.

24 In the DEIS, Coquille and Interior itself
25 concede this point. In Section 1.2 you state, "the

1 acquisition of the 2.4-acre site in trust pursuant
2 to the Secretary's authority under the Indian
3 Reorganization Act..." If that is true, then every
4 tribe can use the IRA to meet the restored lands
5 exception.

6 Of course, that would be absurd and it
7 would be inconsistent with both the letter of IGRA
8 and the intent of the Coquille Restoration Act, as
9 pointed out by its authors, Senator Wyden and
10 Representative DeFazio, who have both stated
11 formally that "they did not intend the
12 establishment of a multicounty service area for the
13 Coquille Indian Tribe in the Coquille Restoration
14 Act to supersede the requirements of IGRA."

15 I would also note the irony of the BIA's
16 planned inadvertent discovery plan, as you noted at
17 the outset of tonight's comments. It would be to
18 notify a tribe who is not the proponent tribe in
19 this proposed action. That alone illustrates the
20 ill-advised approach of the federal government in
21 this overall ill-advised scheme to put a casino
22 where it doesn't belong under federal law.

23 Interior and Coquille both concede that
24 this single casino would harm all of Coquille's
25 sister tribes, some to the tune of 27 percent of

1 their governmental revenue, revenue used for tribal
2 member services like foster care, elder support,
3 education, housing, social services.

4 This process should be halted now. It's
5 bad for tribes. It's bad for Oregon. It violates
6 NEPA. It violates IGRA.

7 Thank you.

8 MODERATOR: Thank you for your comments.

9 The next speaker is Representative Wallen.
10 Please unmute yourself.

11 REPRESENTATIVE WALLEN: Good evening.
12 Thank you for this time. I am Representative Kim
13 Wallen. I represent the City of Medford in the
14 Oregon State Legislature, and I also sit on the
15 gaming committee that is an interim committee that
16 was put together by the speaker for -- it is a
17 joint committee, so that means Republicans and
18 Democrats from both chambers of the legislature.

19 We have been studying the issues about all
20 gambling and gaming in the state for a number of
21 months. All summer we met. And I do want to make
22 one point clear from those hearings.

23 We asked multiple times about the "one
24 tribe, one casino" policy, and it was made very
25 clear that that is merely an agreement or a

1 statement made by individual governors as they take
2 office, but that that's not written policy
3 anywhere. It's not statute. It is just the way
4 business has been done, but it's not a true formal
5 policy of the state. And I just want to clarify
6 that.

7 One of the other things that became clear
8 in those committee hearings was that every tribe is
9 very different, and there is not agreement among
10 the tribes about whether there should be one casino
11 or not.

12 Many tribes are preparing for the
13 eventuality that there would be an ability for each
14 tribe to have more than one casino. The Coquilles
15 are not the only tribe that are -- that is trying
16 for that.

17 And some tribes want every tribe to have
18 every opportunity to develop their economic base,
19 while other tribes are definitely not in favor of
20 additional growth by some of the smaller tribes.

21 So there's -- it is not a zero-sum game.
22 There -- it is not clear that additional casinos
23 are good or bad for other tribes. We just don't
24 have enough data on some of that.

25 When the Coquille first purchased the land

1 here in Jackson County, the City took a very
2 wait-and-see attitude about how this was going to
3 go, because we -- that was their nexus to Jackson
4 County, some members and then buying that land.

5 And honestly, they've been great partners.
6 The hotel they've built is beautiful. It's a great
7 addition to our community. The City Manager, the
8 City Council have become quite connected to the
9 Coquille. They are in favor of growth, the City
10 is. The City has done their engineering studies on
11 traffic and on their best guess, which is pretty
12 educated, on law enforcement needs.

13 And so I just want to say that the
14 Coquille have been a great partner with the City of
15 Medford and in Jackson County since they got here,
16 and I wanted to correct the "one tribe, one casino"
17 idea.

18 Thank you.

19 MODERATOR: Thank you for your comments.

20 The next speaker is Jeri Thompson. Please
21 unmute yourself.

22 MS. THOMPSON: (Speaking tribal language.)
23 Can you hear me?

24 MODERATOR: Yes.

25 MS. THOMPSON: Good evening. Thank you

1 for having this forum for us. My name is Jeri
2 Thompson. I am the chairperson of the -- excuse
3 me -- Tolowa Dee-ni' Nation.

4 Tolowa Dee-ni' Nation is a sovereign,
5 federally-recognized Indian tribe. Our reservation
6 lands and community are located approximately 110
7 miles from the site of the Coquille Tribe's
8 proposed gaming facility.

9 The adverse socioeconomic effects on the
10 Tolowa Dee-ni' Nation are grossly underestimated.
11 The nation depends on revenues from its Lucky 7
12 gaming facility to fund critical governmental and
13 social-welfare programs and services for our
14 citizens.

15 The nation has sought to diversify its
16 economy, but for the immediate future, we are
17 largely dependent on our gaming revenues to fund
18 our government. Any reduction in revenues from our
19 gaming facility will be felt across a wide range of
20 governmental services. The welfare of our nation's
21 citizens is at stake here.

22 In the face of these real-world impacts,
23 the draft EIS relies on an abstract model to assess
24 potential impacts to our economy and people. The
25 model does not account for human behavior and the

1 many variables that determine gaming revenues.

2 The draft is untethered from reality of
3 the impacts we will feel if a massive gaming
4 facility is opened about 100 miles away.

5 Illogically, the draft assesses the
6 impacts to the Yurok and the Karuk gaming
7 facilities as much greater than the impact to our
8 facility, even though our facility is closer to the
9 Coquille proposed gaming site.

10 Inexplicably, the draft does not reference
11 or analyze any demographic data for the community
12 that is the Tolowa Dee-ni' Nation. There is no
13 gaming market segment identified for the Tolowa
14 Dee-ni' Nation anywhere in the background or
15 analysis.

16 The conclusion that the effects on our
17 gaming revenues will be small is based on
18 speculation that those effects will diminish over
19 time because of population growth and expanding
20 economies at Tolowa. No factual support for this
21 speculation is offered, and there is none. In
22 addition, what little information included is more
23 than three years old. It is out of date.

24 As a result, it appears that the drafter
25 started with a preconceived result in mind that a

1 project should go forward and concocted an analysis
2 to support that outcome. The draft is biased in
3 favor of the Coquille gaming project.

4 Second, we are concerned that the
5 potential impacts to coho and Chinook salmon in
6 Bear Creek have not been adequately identified or
7 assessed. The Tolowa Dee-ni' Nation relies on
8 salmon for food for its citizens and for cultural
9 ceremonies. Our knowledge of the lifecycles of the
10 salmon binds our community and makes up our tribal
11 identity.

12 The draft EIS dismisses the potential
13 impacts to the salmon because Bear Creek is located
14 within the boundaries of the proposed gaming
15 facility.

16 Those impacts cannot be ignored simply
17 because the impacts fall outside that boundary.
18 NEPA requires an assessment of the impacts at the
19 proposed site and in the surrounding areas, which
20 was done for socioeconomic impacts. The draft does
21 not include salmon habitat in the modeled baseline
22 of environmental conditions, so of course an
23 assessment of impacts will be skewed in favor of no
24 impacts.

25 MODERATOR: Excuse me. Chairman, you have

1 exceeded the three minutes. Please conclude your
2 comments.

3 MS. THOMPSON: Okay. Thank you.
4 (Speaking tribal language) for listening. Thank
5 you very much.

6 MODERATOR: Thank you.

7 The next speaker is Joseph Clarizio.
8 Please unmute yourself.

9 MR. CLARIZIO: Can you hear me?

10 MODERATOR: Yes.

11 MR. CLARIZIO: Thank you for letting me
12 speak.

13 MODERATOR: Hi.

14 MR. CLARIZIO: My name is Joseph Clarizio.
15 I am the director of operations from Medford for
16 Tribal One, which is a business owned by the
17 Coquille Tribe. I oversee operations for the
18 tribe's properties here in Medford and particularly
19 at the Roxy Ann Lanes, the site for the proposed
20 gaming facility.

21 I have a bachelor of science in
22 landscape/turf management at Oregon State
23 University. My career consists of the following:
24 32 years of golf course operations, 20 years of
25 golf course/sports field consultant. I am also a

1 certified arborist and 13 years as restaurant owner
2 and operator.

3 I oversee the golf course operations at
4 Bear Creek Golf Course, which is next door to the
5 2.4 acres of the proposed gaming site. I am proud
6 to say that we exercise environmental best
7 management practices at Bear Creek Golf Course,
8 along with all the other properties.

9 I have actively participated in the
10 practices of the Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary
11 Program for over 25 years and are implementing
12 those practices in our properties here in Medford.
13 We partner with the practices of the Bear Creek
14 Restoration Initiative.

15 My wife and I reside in Medford, Oregon,
16 moved here four years ago from the Portland area.
17 I have been employed by Tribal One for one and a
18 half years, and I can emphatically say the
19 following about Tribal One: They have an
20 incredible leadership. They -- their leadership is
21 demonstrated by their devoted commitment to the
22 Medford community.

23 This is evidenced by their continued
24 investment in businesses such as seen in the new
25 Compass Hotel, which has brought more than 60 new

1 jobs to the area.

2 This excellence is also seen in the
3 reinvestment in the Roxy Ann bowling alley, which
4 is the site of the gaming center. This business
5 suffered the repercussions of loss in business due
6 to COVID. Tribal One is committed to
7 reestablishing and giving families and residents a
8 much-needed place for entertainment as we invest
9 into this property.

10 They are committed to kids, as they
11 partner with local kid programs and provide
12 opportunities for them to participate in bowling
13 and in golf. We see multiple groups participating
14 on a daily basis.

15 The development of this small gaming
16 facility would be another very positive investment
17 to the City of Medford that demonstrates Tribal
18 One's long-term commitment to this city.

19 Thank you for allowing me to speak.

20 MODERATOR: Thank you for your comments.

21 The next speaker is Sue Steward. Please
22 unmute yourself.

23 MS. STEWARD: Good evening. Can you hear
24 me?

25 MODERATOR: Yes.

1 MS. STEWARD: Thank you.

2 I am Kathleen Susan Steward. I am a Cow
3 Creek citizen member and tribal board member, and I
4 appreciate this opportunity to speak to you tonight
5 about the Coquille gaming project. I am opposed to
6 the Coquille Tribe's building of a Medford casino.

7 The tribe -- the Coquille Tribe does not
8 have ancestral ties to the Medford area. Medford
9 is 180 miles from the Coquille Tribe's ancestral
10 territory.

11 This project is designed to benefit only
12 the Coquille Tribe and not the people of Medford or
13 the surrounding area. This project unfairly
14 benefits the Coquille Tribe at the expense of the
15 other tribes in the area. It severely impacts --
16 it severely negatively impacts the other tribes.

17 The notice of intent was published in
18 2015. The Coquille Tribe has made significant
19 changes to the project since the notice of intent
20 was published. These changes include the scope of
21 work. The scope of the draft environmental impact
22 statement, the DEIS, needs to reflect the total 45
23 acres that the Coquille Indian Tribe anticipates
24 for this gaming facility project.

25 The draft EIS reflects outdated

1 information. Many of the cited reports are from
2 2016, and little effort has been made to correct
3 this oversight. The few report revisions on record
4 were made in 2019 and are reflected in one- to
5 two-page updates. All reports need to be brought
6 to current because there have been many changes to
7 the project since 2015.

8 The draft EIS should consider whether the
9 casino should be subject to the two-part
10 determination process. This would allow the BIA to
11 consider whether the casino would be in the best
12 interest of the surrounding community.

13 It certainly is not in the best interest
14 of the Cow Creek Band of Indian Tribe. The
15 outdated reports in the draft EIS estimate that if
16 the Coquille casino project gets approved, it will
17 create a decrease of 25 percent to Cow Creek
18 government revenue.

19 I think it is important to state that the
20 cost of living has skyrocketed since COVID-19 hit
21 in 2020, with a 14.6 percent increase over the past
22 two years. This is only one factor that leads me
23 to believe that the 25 percent decrease which was
24 estimated in the DEIS for our tribal revenue is
25 very low.

1 This decrease in tribal revenue would put
2 an unnecessary burden on the tribe and local
3 services to meet the needs of our Cow Creek
4 citizens.

5 And in closing, I would just like to say
6 that the Coquille Tribe already has a casino. I
7 think that that's been brought out many times
8 tonight. A second casino will disrupt that
9 delicate balance of gaming in the state of Oregon,
10 which is what that agreement with Oregon was about.
11 The construction of another casino will likely set
12 off a wave of gaming expansion across the state of
13 Oregon, which is not good for any of us.

14 So in closing, thank you for allowing me
15 this time to share the reasons why I oppose the
16 Coquille Tribe's intent to build a second casino in
17 Medford, which is 180 miles from their ancestral
18 area, which will negatively impact the economic
19 stability and sustainability of other nearby
20 tribes. This project should be declined.

21 Thank you.

22 MODERATOR: Thank you for your comments.

23 The next speaker is Edward Metcalf.

24 Please unmute yourself.

25 MR. METCALF: Hello. Can you hear me?

1 MODERATOR: Yes.

2 MR. METCALF: Hi. My name is Edward
3 Metcalf. I am a college-aged tribal member of the
4 Coquille Indian Tribe. Thanks to the tribe, I was
5 able to get scholarships that allowed me to pursue
6 a higher education at the Oregon Institute of
7 Technology, where at the end of this week I will
8 have finished acquiring a bachelor's degree in
9 mechanical engineering.

10 The tribe has also greatly helped me in
11 health care. I was born extremely premature and
12 most likely would have died if I did not receive
13 the quality of care that I was able to receive, in
14 large part thanks to the high-quality health care
15 that's offered by my tribe.

16 As a young person who is about to start
17 his life officially, one thing that I am concerned
18 about is for the future of my tribe. Will my
19 children and my grandchildren be able to experience
20 the same level of benefits that I was able to
21 receive? Will they be set up for life as well as I
22 have been set up for life?

23 And the simple fact is as the tribe's
24 population grows, the need for economic development
25 will grow as well.

1 I have worked at the tribal casino in the
2 past as a bellman, as someone working in
3 housekeeping and working in the restaurants of the
4 casino. And I can speak from personal experience
5 that the tribe offers generous health care packages
6 as well as great 401(k) programs. The best 401(k)
7 programs I ever received in my work history was
8 when I was working for the tribe.

9 So not only is this good for the tribe,
10 but it's good for the surrounding area as well for
11 all the jobs it will provide for the people in
12 Medford.

13 I've also heard a lot of people talk about
14 "one casino, one tribe"; but this is just simply
15 not the case in Oregon. The Coos Tribe, one of our
16 friends and neighbors in Coos Bay, they have two
17 casinos. And when they made their second casino, I
18 don't remember there being nearly as much
19 administrative challenge on their part to make two
20 casinos.

21 As all tribes in Oregon's population grow,
22 they must be allowed to economically grow as well
23 in order to support their constituents.

24 Thank you for letting me speak, and I'll
25 give up the rest of my time.

1 MODERATOR: Thank you for your comment.
2 The next speaker is Sue Kupillas. Please
3 unmute yourself.

4 MS. KUPILLAS: Hello. This is Sue
5 Kupillas, a former county commissioner in Jackson
6 County for 16 years.

7 When the first proposal for the Coquille
8 gaming facility came up, I met with the Coquille
9 Tribe a number of times to talk about what the
10 potential was and what the proposal was, but
11 concluded finally that I oppose putting another
12 casino -- putting a casino in Medford by the
13 Coquille Tribe.

14 And there are several reasons for this,
15 but -- I live in Jackson County, but I also live in
16 the City of Medford. And I think that the EIS
17 underestimates the potential of crime involved
18 around the casino. I think it underestimates the
19 traffic impacts and says that they will mitigate
20 all of those things.

21 But, you know, I -- having been in County
22 government, I know how promises are and what
23 happens really. So I think it's not a good impact.

24 I believe totally in the idea of one
25 casino per tribe. The Coquille Tribe already has a

1 casino, the Mill Creek -- the Mill Casino in Coos
2 Bay, and I think this opens the door for gaming
3 facilities all over the state of Oregon. I don't
4 think that's who we are.

5 So looking at the impact of the total
6 facility on the City of Medford, on Jackson County
7 and the idea that casinos will expand all over the
8 state of Oregon from other tribes, I think that's
9 not who we are and that's not who we want to be.

10 I think "one tribe, one casino" is really
11 a good policy for the state of Oregon. So I am
12 opposing the casino.

13 I have a number of other issues with it,
14 but because the BIA has given such a short time for
15 us to respond to this huge DEIS -- and quite
16 frankly, who has had time to read the whole thing,
17 right?

18 So I think they are stifling participation
19 in responding to this current DEIS, and I think
20 that they have not considered updating the DEIS
21 with the current plans from the Coquille Tribe. I
22 mean, the Coquille Tribe has changed plans
23 dramatically from when I met with them when I was a
24 County commissioner. So I think it all needs to be
25 updated.

1 I have been totally involved with federal
2 forest issues and all this kind of thing over the
3 years, and this is the most rushed hearing I have
4 ever seen. And I have not had a chance to read the
5 whole DEIS. So I object to that also. It's
6 stifling participation in this process.

7 Thank you.

8 MODERATOR: Thank you.

9 The next speaker is Michael Brady. Please
10 unmute yourself.

11 MR. BRADY: Can you hear me okay?

12 MODERATOR: Yes.

13 MR. BRADY: Hi. I am Mike Brady. I have
14 been a resident of Jackson County for the past
15 eight years, attended SOU and now operate my
16 marketing company here in the Rogue Valley.

17 Prior to moving back to Oregon, I was the
18 director of marketing for two different tribal
19 gaming authorities in California, both of which
20 were at the time working to expand their facilities
21 to better provide for their members, so this
22 process is somewhat familiar to me.

23 Looking at the draft EIS, the proposed
24 mitigation measures, the best management practices
25 and also looking at the potential alternatives, it

1 appears the Medford site is the one that is going
2 to achieve the intended purpose while still, you
3 know, maintaining the goal of having the least
4 amount of environmental impact.

5 Now -- and I have only been here for the
6 past eight years, but in that time the consistent
7 theme has been the Coquille Tribe making really
8 every effort to be great community partners for
9 those of us living here in Jackson County. And,
10 you know, deepening an already good relationship
11 makes sense.

12 And quite frankly, you know, the number of
13 career opportunities, both through construction and
14 staffing, would be fantastic for our community.
15 So, you know, I would ask that we consider this
16 proposal.

17 Thanks for giving me the opportunity to
18 contribute.

19 MODERATOR: Thank you.

20 The next speaker is Gary Miller. Please
21 unmute yourself. Gary?

22 MR. MILLER: Okay. Am I coming through?

23 MODERATOR: Yes, you are.

24 MR. MILLER: Oh, good. Okay.

25 I am opposed to this Coquille's building

1 of the Medford casino. I live in Medford and --
2 well over 30 years, and during that time I have
3 been involved with many community service
4 organizations, past and present. And the Cow Creek
5 Tribe takes -- does not take a seat to any
6 organization that I have worked with as far as
7 support of the community.

8 And I just wanted to share another
9 observation. For this project, I don't have a
10 sense of any groundswell of community support for
11 it. And it -- I don't know. It just keeps --
12 doesn't go away. You know, the -- Medford does not
13 support this casino. And I just wanted to add that
14 along with all the other comments that have been
15 made.

16 Thank you.

17 MODERATOR: Thank you for your comment.

18 The next speaker is Lorri Albertson, if
19 you can please unmute yourself.

20 MS. ALBERTSON: Can you hear me?

21 MODERATOR: Yes, I can.

22 MS. ALBERTSON: My name is Lorri
23 Albertson. I'm an employee of the Cow Creek Tribe,
24 and I have been employed by them for the last 25
25 years. I am opposed to the Coquille building a

1 casino in Medford.

2 The Cow Creek businesses provide jobs in a
3 region where finding good-paying jobs with good
4 benefits are becoming harder and harder to find. I
5 have been very lucky to have been supported by the
6 Cow Creek Tribe for the many years that I have
7 worked for them.

8 I also was a single mother when I started
9 at the casino, raising two tribal children; and
10 they have helped them both succeed in everything
11 they've wanted to do.

12 The BIA and the Coquille will kill jobs
13 where they are needed most.

14 That's all I have to say. Thank you for
15 your time.

16 MODERATOR: Thank you.

17 The next speaker is Jay Ellenberger.
18 Please unmute yourself.

19 MR. ELLENBERGER: Can you hear me okay?

20 MODERATOR: Yes.

21 MR. ELLENBERGER: Okay. Thank you for the
22 opportunity.

23 My name's Jay Ellenberger. I am an
24 employee of the Cow Creek Tribe.

25 I am opposed to the Coquille building a

1 casino in Medford due to the negative impacts to
2 the casino and the Cow Creek Tribe and the
3 economics that it supports. If this
4 off-reservation casino is allowed to proceed, the
5 loss in revenues, layoffs and loss of wages and
6 benefits won't just hurt the Cow Creek community,
7 but the entire economic economy of the Douglas and
8 Jackson County.

9 Cow Creek is among the largest employers
10 in our region. The Cow Creek Tribe supports the
11 tribe and nontribal families and neighbors with
12 jobs and social services along with grants.

13 The BIA should not be choosing an
14 off-reservation casino over the established
15 reservation sites that we have today.

16 Thank you for the opportunity.

17 MODERATOR: Thank you.

18 The next speaker is Greg Lemhouse. Please
19 unmute yourself.

20 MR. LEMHOUSE: Good evening, and thank you
21 for letting me testify tonight on this important
22 issue.

23 My name is Greg Lemhouse. I am a 27-year
24 resident of Jackson County, including spending ten
25 years on the Ashland City Council.

1 I have witnessed the Coquille Indian Tribe
2 invest in this community for the past decade and go
3 through this process, which has been incredibly
4 long and a long time coming. I enthusiastically
5 support their application for the casino.

6 I think it is important to recognize the
7 investments that the Coquille have made in this
8 community that go far beyond simply writing checks.
9 This is an investment in jobs, and it can be seen
10 in the area where the fires raged through here just
11 a few years ago. They have built a wonderful hotel
12 and have brought real jobs to this area.

13 I think it's also important for anybody
14 interested in the facts to go back and look at the
15 records. Look at the recent decision by the
16 interim gaming committee in the legislature which
17 spoke clearly that there is no "one tribe, one
18 casino" policy. The fact is there are several
19 tribes seeking additional casinos. The Coquille
20 are merely one of them.

21 And let's also keep in mind that this is
22 within the footprint of a current bowling alley.
23 This is not a large project. This will not
24 overwhelm the services of the City of Medford. The
25 City of Medford has an outstanding police

1 department, and I have no doubts they will be able
2 to respond accordingly to any incidents or issues
3 that video-gaming machines may have within the
4 current bowling alley footprint.

5 There are currently several areas in the
6 City of Medford where people can enjoy video gaming
7 and has not caused the problem that some may want
8 others to believe.

9 I think it's also really important to
10 understand that this is an issue that should lie on
11 the community members of Medford. If people are
12 afraid of competition, the best answer to that is
13 to compete, to provide a better product, a better
14 service than your competitors.

15 We know that our economic system here in
16 this country relies on that. And when companies
17 compete, when organizations compete, communities
18 are better off, just like the City of Medford will
19 be.

20 I also want to leave listeners with this
21 fact, that in 2022 the Jackson County-Medford
22 Chamber of Commerce recognized the Coquille Indian
23 Tribe as one of the outstanding employers of the
24 year. That comes from that type of investment in
25 our community.

1 And I believe that providing more jobs,
2 more opportunities in our community simply makes
3 our community a better place; and, therefore, I
4 enthusiastically support the application for the
5 Coquille Indian Tribe.

6 Thank you.

7 MODERATOR: Thank you for your comments.

8 The next speaker is Lorri Albertson.

9 Please unmute yourself.

10 MR. RAIDER: Can you hear me now?

11 MODERATOR: Yes.

12 MR. RAIDER: I'm sorry. I got the link
13 from somebody, from my friend.

14 My name is Richard Raider. I'm a resident
15 of Douglas County, Oregon, and I am opposed to the
16 proposal of having the casino put in Medford by the
17 Coquille Tribe.

18 The Coquille Tribe are 172 miles from
19 their tribal headquarters to where they want to put
20 a casino.

21 The Coquille Tribe has consistently shown
22 they do not respect local communities. As example,
23 in -- ten years ago the Coquille Tribe was sued by
24 the City of North Bend Police Department for
25 failure to pay their agreed-upon fees and charges.

1 Then the Coquille Tribe entered an
2 agreement with the City of North Bend to do
3 tax-revenue-sharing for a hotel. They then reneged
4 on that contract also. They use their tribal
5 sovereignty to get out of the agreed-upon contracts
6 and agreements.

7 This will hurt tribal and nontribal
8 communities in rural Oregon. The BIA should not be
9 choosing an off-reservation casino over several
10 other facilities in the region. They have a casino
11 they can expand in the Coos Bay area where their
12 tribal populations live, work and thrive.

13 Even estimates show that this additional
14 casino is going to just separate and move moneys
15 around while not bringing any real, lasting jobs.

16 Thank you.

17 MODERATOR: Thank you for your comments.

18 The next speaker is Ray Martin. Please
19 unmute yourself.

20 MR. MARTIN: Good evening. My name is Ray
21 Martin. I am a citizen of the Tolowa Dee-ni'
22 Nation, and I am opposed to the Coquille casino.

23 I believe the EIS is flawed. It doesn't
24 fully examine the impacts on my tribe.

25 My tribe struggles to provide basic

1 services to its tribal members. Our tribe only has
2 one very small casino that has less than 350
3 machines, while the Coquille Tribe operates a huge
4 casino in North Bend, Oregon that has a much larger
5 footprint, much more revenue.

6 I believe that this is an effort by
7 Coquille to skirt IGRA and not follow the two-part
8 determination process, which they should have to
9 follow.

10 Their doing this harms the community of
11 Medford; it harms the state of Oregon; and it harms
12 the other tribes, like Tolowa, Yurok, Elk Valley
13 Rancheria, Karuk and Klamath.

14 Thank you.

15 MODERATOR: Thank you.

16 The next speaker is Allen Purdy. Please
17 unmute yourself.

18 MR. PURDY: Thank you.

19 My name's Allen Purdy. I live in Jackson
20 County. I have lived here for 28 years, and I
21 support Alternate A and the economic development
22 this project will bring to our region.

23 The location of the proposed gaming
24 facility in Medford is in a blighted strip of a
25 busy artery in our community that has been

1 neglected for many, many years and is in desperate
2 need of redevelopment.

3 The Coquilles recently completed a
4 beautiful new hotel in the immediate area, so they
5 are already committed to changing our community for
6 the better. They have many -- they have other
7 plans that will nicely complement our very busy
8 baseball fields that are located nearby as well.

9 The proposed site is not large enough to
10 support an enormous facility, only one that is just
11 big enough to be a big benefit to our local
12 neighborhood, our economy with construction jobs,
13 service and support jobs and consistent employment
14 for years to come.

15 Again, this project will spruce up yet
16 another lot that has been in need of attention for
17 many years, and the construction revenue of --
18 estimated in the \$25-plus-million range will end up
19 being here for a very long time.

20 There were some comments about lead,
21 arsenic contamination. That is all over the entire
22 valley due to its use as a fertilizer years -- for
23 decades in the pear orchards that covered the
24 valley. This -- the DEQ approves the removal and
25 relocation to an approved dump site here in the

1 valley, and it's just common practice.

2 Please add my name to the all-in list in
3 support of the project and the Coquille Tribe all
4 the way around.

5 Thank you.

6 MODERATOR: Thank you.

7 The next speaker is Rachel Tobias. Please
8 unmute yourself.

9 MS. TOBIAS: Thank you.

10 My name is Rachel Tobias. I am an
11 attorney for the Cow Creek Tribe.

12 I must respectfully disagree with
13 Representative Wallen's and others' comments about
14 the long-standing and well-established "one tribe,
15 one casino" policy that does, in fact, exist in
16 Oregon. The CTCLUSI's land was pre-IGRA, and the
17 second casino they have is on reservation land and
18 does not fall under this policy that we're
19 discussing.

20 The "one casino, one tribe" policy appears
21 in several compacts between the State and the
22 tribes. While these compacts reference Class III
23 gaming, our written comments will detail that the
24 distinction between Class II and Class III gaming
25 are becoming obsolete.

1 The Coquille's own original compact
2 explicitly stated that they could set up only a
3 temporary casino while they built the Mill Creek
4 [verbatim] Casino and, I quote, "at no time will
5 more than one gaming facility be open to the
6 general public under this compact."

7 In fact, every single Class III compact
8 between the State of Oregon and the tribes
9 explicitly limits them to one facility through its
10 "gaming at another location or facility" clause.
11 Those clauses all state, "The tribe hereby waives
12 any right it may have under IGRA to negotiate a
13 compact for Class III gaming at any other location
14 or facility," and that -- the waiver of that right
15 lasts for varying amounts of time.

16 Some compacts call the limitation out
17 explicitly, such as the Warm Springs 2010 compact,
18 which states at Section 5C, "in accordance with
19 State policy to authorize only one casino per
20 tribe, the nine Class III gaming compacts in the
21 State of Oregon each authorize only one Class III
22 casino per tribe." Several other compacts also
23 explicitly call out the one-casino-per-tribe
24 policy.

25 It also appears in Governor Kitzhaber's

1 stated policy and in his 2013 white paper, "Gaming
2 in Oregon: A Position Paper." It appears in a
3 2013 letter from Senators Wyden and Merkley. It
4 appears in a letter from Governor Roberts of 2016.
5 It's reflected in Governor-elect Kotek's statements
6 this year to the Grand Ronde Tribes' newspaper
7 supporting the "one casino per tribe on reservation
8 land" policy.

9 Governor Brown alluded to the policy in a
10 letter in 2016, stating, "I believe that the State
11 should as a matter of policy resist the building of
12 additional casinos, because State support for even
13 a single modest additional casino is likely to lead
14 to significant efforts to expand gaming across
15 Oregon to the detriment of the public welfare."

16 This statement was expressly relied upon
17 by the Department of the Interior in 2020, when you
18 initially rejected the Coquille's off-reservation
19 casino.

20 Clearly this policy exists in written form
21 and has been the adopted policy of governors year
22 over year since gaming -- tribal gaming began.
23 Nobody contends that it has been adopted by the
24 legislature in statute. It is clearly the policy
25 of the State, the executive branch. Statements to

1 the contrary are misleading and false.

2 Thank you.

3 MODERATOR: Thank you.

4 The next speaker is Jacob Ansures. Please
5 unmute yourself.

6 MR. ANSURES: Hello. My name is Jacob
7 Ansures. I am opposed to the Coquille building of
8 the Medford casino. I am a resident of Jackson
9 County. I have been a resident for 47 years, my
10 entire life. I am also a Cow Creek tribal member.
11 I appreciate you giving this opportunity to express
12 my opinion in this matter.

13 One of the reasons why I disagree with
14 this is because it's -- somebody had mentioned it's
15 being built next to the fields that children play
16 on, you know, and casinos to me are not something
17 that children should be looking forward to going to
18 when they're older.

19 Also, I would like to say that, you know,
20 nobody's talking about all of the little
21 mom-and-pop -- little gambling places which will
22 lose money.

23 And another reason I oppose this casino
24 being built is because the initial notice of intent
25 for the casino was published in 2015. The Coquille

1 Indian Tribe has made significant changes to the
2 project since then, and the scope of the project
3 has changed. The scope of the DEIS should be
4 changed to reflect the entire development that they
5 intend to build.

6 Another reason I oppose this casino being
7 built is because the State of Oregon has already
8 established a "one casino, one tribe" agreement.

9 I also oppose the casino being built
10 because I feel the information in the DEIS is
11 outdated. Many of the reports are from 2016, and
12 there has been very little done to update the --
13 these reports. All of the reports should be
14 updated, as there have been many changes in the
15 world in the last six years.

16 I appreciate your guys's opportunity to
17 speak and let you know my feelings on this. Thank
18 you.

19 MODERATOR: Thank you.

20 The next speaker is Melissa Cribbins.
21 Please unmute yourself.

22 MS. CRIBBINS: Good evening. My name is
23 Melissa Cribbins, and I have been a Coos County
24 Commissioner for the last ten years.

25 I am testifying tonight to express my

1 support for Alternative A of the draft EIS for the
2 Coquille Tribe's proposed casino in Medford.

3 They say that past behavior is the best
4 predictor of future behavior; and as a Coos County
5 Commissioner, I have worked with the Coquille Tribe
6 to promote economic development and job creation in
7 our area. They have been excellent community
8 partners and have invested countless millions of
9 dollars in our region. They have demonstrated
10 their concern and their interest in economic
11 development in our area as well as for the economic
12 welfare of our citizens.

13 The casino also serves as a gathering
14 point and as an emergency evacuation facility,
15 which is, of course, not required but is a huge
16 benefit to the community.

17 I have no doubt at all that the Coquille
18 Tribe will also be excellent community partners for
19 the Jackson County area.

20 Mark Twain once said that the truth --
21 sorry -- that a lie can get halfway around the
22 world before the truth can even get its pants on.
23 The statement about "one tribe, one casino" is that
24 sort of statement.

25 Thank you for your time.

1 MODERATOR: Thank you.

2 The next speaker is Tabbitha Mataya.

3 Please unmute yourself.

4 MS. MATAYA: Can you hear me?

5 MODERATOR: Yes.

6 MS. MATAYA: Good.

7 So my name is Tabbitha Mataya. I have
8 worked for the Cow Creek Tribe for a collective of
9 28 years. I started with them when I was 16 years
10 old.

11 I have -- in the midst of my career have
12 been able to develop myself professionally as well
13 as socially. The tribe has provided many different
14 programs for us.

15 The Cow Creek Tribe has provided a lot of
16 support in the community. In 1997, when we were
17 established as a gaming facility, as stated, we
18 have given over \$30 million to our community, and
19 this is strictly on casino revenues. And these
20 casino revenues make our CASA, housing, our
21 homeless people, many of the services that we
22 provide through the Douglas County possible.

23 With the Medford casino being established,
24 it would take a lot of this financial revenue away
25 from our community that helps develop our community

1 as a whole. I am very much so opposed as to all of
2 this because we're hurting -- you would hurt -- the
3 BIA and the Coquille Tribe would hurt our charities
4 and our social services that we provide throughout
5 our entire community.

6 And I need to let it be known that the Cow
7 Creek Tribe has been very successful in our own
8 ancestral territory. We developed our casino in
9 our seven counties.

10 And let that be known that, yes, it may be
11 an argument, that one casino, one tribe, but it
12 makes sense. The State of Oregon is a very small
13 state, and if we were to allow all tribes, the nine
14 tribes, to develop more than one casino, we would
15 be hurting a lot of revenues for all tribes
16 collectively, not just ourselves.

17 I am very much so opposed to this.

18 Thank you so much for your time.

19 MODERATOR: Thank you for your comment.

20 The next speaker is Ron Doan. Please
21 unmute yourself.

22 MR. DOAN: This is Ron Doan. Can you hear
23 me okay?

24 MODERATOR: Yes.

25 MR. DOAN: Okay. Good.

1 Well, first of all, good evening. And
2 thank you so much for allowing this opportunity.
3 We very much appreciate it.

4 I am a community advocate for all of
5 Southern Oregon. I am very much opposed and
6 encourage your rejection of this casino project
7 proposal for the Coquille Tribe.

8 I'm not sure why we are considering this
9 DEIS again, since the prior administration,
10 Department of Interior already has opposed the
11 Coquille Tribe building a casino in Medford. The
12 State of Oregon, City of Medford, Jackson County
13 have all gone on record in opposition to this
14 Coquille casino in Southern Oregon, specifically in
15 Medford.

16 The Coquille Tribe does not have ancestral
17 ties, no history with the Medford community and
18 Jackson County. They are now and have always been
19 a coastal community with no historical ties to
20 Jackson County.

21 I'm also very much aware of the
22 involvement and support from the Cow Creek Tribe
23 and its Cow Creek Foundation helping hospitals,
24 schools, children's services, elder care, colleges,
25 universities -- many, many nonprofits of all sizes.

1 And Cow Creeks have been helping them to build a
2 stronger economy and a stronger community.

3 So at this time I ask for you to reject
4 this project once and for all.

5 Thank you so much for your time.

6 MODERATOR: Thank you.

7 If there is anybody else who would like to
8 speak, please raise your hand or by pressing star 9
9 if you are joining by phone.

10 The next speaker is Gail Hatcher. Please
11 unmute yourself.

12 MS. HATCHER: Can you hear me?

13 MODERATOR: Yes.

14 MS. HATCHER: Thank you.

15 My name is Gail Hatcher; and I am vice
16 chair for the Klamath Tribes, which is made up of
17 three distinct tribes: the Klamath, the Modoc, and
18 the Yahooskin. And I would like to say that the
19 Klamath Tribes are opposed to a casino in Medford
20 by the Coquille Tribe.

21 A casino in Medford would be devastating
22 to our tribe here in Klamath County. That casino
23 would cause a loss of employment, not only to
24 tribal members, but to nontribal as well. The
25 Kla-Mo-Ya casino employs a number of people, and

1 should we have a competing casino just on the other
2 side of the mountain, it would be devastating.

3 Klamath County has a very high poverty
4 level, and employment is very difficult to come by
5 within our area. This would impact our programs
6 that the tribe currently offers to its tribal
7 members. The Klamath Tribes also have experienced
8 devastating fires as well.

9 I hate for us to compare area to area, but
10 these are the things that are going to be impacted
11 should this casino be built over in Medford. It's
12 not fair to pit tribe against tribe, especially
13 when some tribes are in a very rural area. Casinos
14 can benefit communities, but we don't want to, in a
15 sense, tear each other down just trying to help our
16 own communities.

17 We need to stay in our own area. The
18 Klamath Tribes is less than 100 miles from the
19 proposed area, and I think Coquille would do best
20 to stay within their own tribal areas and do what
21 they can do on the coast.

22 I too would like to request that we have
23 more time to look at this and prepare our
24 statements.

25 And just to say again, Klamath Tribes

1 opposes this casino.

2 Thank you.

3 MODERATOR: Thank you.

4 The next speaker is Katrina Potter.

5 Please unmute yourself.

6 MS. POTTER: Yes, hi. My name is Katrina
7 Potter. I am an employee of the Cow Creek Tribe.

8 I am opposed to the Coquille Tribe
9 building a casino in Medford. Cow Creek businesses
10 provide both jobs and significant support to my
11 community. If this off-reservation casino is
12 allowed to proceed, the layoffs and loss of wages
13 and benefits won't just hurt Cow Creek, but it can
14 hurt the entire economy of Douglas and Jackson
15 Counties. Cow Creek and its businesses are among
16 the largest employers in our region.

17 This won't just harm Cow Creek. It will
18 hurt the charities and social service providers who
19 rely on Cow Creek for support.

20 I am opposed to this.

21 Thank you.

22 MODERATOR: Thank you.

23 If there is anybody else who would like to
24 speak, please select the "Raise Hand."

25 The next speaker is Mia Murphy.

1 MS. MURPHY: Hello. My name is Mia
2 Murphy, and I am an employee of the Cow Creek
3 Tribe.

4 I oppose the build of the Coquille casino
5 for a few reasons.

6 You know, I just think that building a
7 casino -- giving them the, you know, permission to
8 build a casino 150 miles away from their -- where
9 their reservation is located just opens up a lot of
10 issues for how and where casinos will be built
11 going forward in the State of Oregon.

12 And I think the Coquille Tribe has the
13 ability to explore other economic development
14 opportunities, just like every other tribe. And I
15 just don't think this is the direction that the
16 State of Oregon wants to go in by starting this --
17 setting this precedent.

18 And so I do oppose this, and thank you for
19 your time.

20 MODERATOR: Thank you.

21 Again, if there's anybody who would like
22 to speak, please raise your hand.

23 MR. HAUG: Good evening, everyone. This
24 is Brian Haug, BIA regional scientist. This
25 concludes the public portion of our meeting.

1 Remember that written comments on the
2 draft EIS are due on February 23rd, 2023, and we'll
3 be holding a second hearing on January 31st, 2023,
4 at 5:30 p.m. Pacific.

5 Thanks again for your participation in the
6 NEPA public process, and have a nice evening.

7 (Whereupon the proceedings were
8 concluded at 7:52 p.m.)

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COURT REPORTERS CERTIFICATE

STATE OF CALIFORNIA)
) ss.
COUNTY OF SAN FRANCISCO)

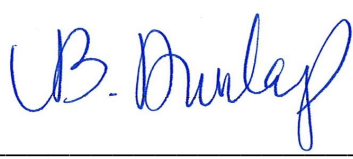
I, Balinda Dunlap, hereby certify:

I am a duly qualified Certified Shorthand Reporter, in the State of California, holder of Certificate Number CSR 10710 issued by the Court Reporters Board of California and which is in full force and effect.

I am not financially interested in this action and am not a relative or employee of any attorney of the parties, or of any of the parties.

I am the reporter that stenographically recorded the testimony in the foregoing proceeding and the foregoing transcript is a true record of the testimony given.

Dated: January 12, 2023



**U.S DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
BUREAU OF INDIAN AFFAIRS**

**PUBLIC MEETING
December 15, 2022**

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**U.S DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
BUREAU OF INDIAN AFFAIRS**

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BUREAU OF INDIAN AFFAIRS**

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