

LOS COYOTES BAND



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Los Coyotes and Big Lagoon Tribes respond to Agua Caliente's new gaming compact

BARSTOW- The Los Coyotes Band of Cahuilla and Cupeno Indians and the Big Lagoon Rancheria today responded to news that the Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians had successfully negotiated a new gaming compact with Governor Schwarzenegger.

"The Los Coyotes wish to extend our congratulations to the Agua Caliente people on reaching an agreement with the State to expand their gaming operations and provide further means of self-sufficiency for its families," said Dr. Catherine Siva Saubel, Los Coyotes spokeswoman. "Agua Caliente's new compact is a clear indication that the Los Coyotes and Big Lagoon compacts have no impact on existing or future agreements. We call on our fellow California tribes to cease any opposition to the Barstow compacts and join our efforts to ensure that all tribes have an opportunity to provide for their people."

Big Lagoon Chairman Virgil Moorehead agreed.

"We hope the governor doesn't forget that our compacts which protect the environment at Big Lagoon still require legislative ratification," Chairman Moorehead said. "The governor has negotiated every compact to meet specific circumstances and needs of everyone involved. We hope Agua Caliente and other tribes who have expressed concerns about the Barstow agreements will recognize the Los Coyotes and Big Lagoon compacts satisfy the unique environmental, legal and economic needs that our sovereign tribes face."

Governor Schwarzenegger signed compacts with the Los Coyotes and Big Lagoon Tribes in September 2005, as a means of preserving the sensitive Big Lagoon environment and pursuing other State policy objectives. The City of Barstow has approved Municipal Services Agreements with both Tribes. The Los Coyotes and Big Lagoon have submitted land-into-trust applications to the federal government and the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) is currently preparing a scoping report for a draft environmental impact statement to identify potential environmental impacts of their joint project. California lawmakers are currently reviewing legislation to approve the compacts.

The Barstow compacts will protect the environmentally sensitive Big Lagoon reservation from development, provide the Tribes with the resources they need to become economically self-sufficient and create approximately 4,000 new jobs and millions of dollars in revenue for the Barstow community.

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The Barstow Casinos and Resort are designed to capture some of the market of an estimated 60 million cars that travel through the community on their way to and from Las Vegas each year. The projects will support approximately 900 construction jobs and 1,700 full time positions at the casinos. It is expected that the Los Coyotes and Big Lagoon tribes will contribute to the local community government yearly. The Barstow community has lagged behind the state in economic development with more than 35% of the residents on public assistance. More than 2,000 local residents signed postcards addressed to the Governor asking him to negotiate the compacts. More information is available at www.barstowcasinosandresort.com.