For Immediate Release



Contact: Shawn Pensoneau (202) 632-7003

New Regional Office to be Opened in Oklahoma City

Washington, DC April 27, 2009 — The National Indian Gaming Commission (NIGC) is announcing the opening of a new Regional Office. The new office, in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, is anticipated to open in May. The Oklahoma City Region Office will handle the western part of the state and Texas, and the Tulsa Region Office will continue to be responsible for the eastern part of Oklahoma and Kansas.

Tom Cunningham, Field Investigator in the Tulsa office, has been chosen to become Region Director of the Oklahoma City Office. Tom joined the NIGC in 2007 as a Field Investigator in the Tulsa Regional Office. Before working at NIGC, Cunningham worked for thirteen years in law enforcement including an assignment to the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) as a Task Force Officer; he also worked on several Organized Crime and Drug Enforcement Task Force (OCDEFT) cases in the Eastern District of Oklahoma through the US Attorney's Office. Cunningham also served as Gaming Commission Chairman for the Seminole Nation of Oklahoma. Cunningham is a member of the Seminole Tribe of Oklahoma.

NIGC made the decision to add a second office in Oklahoma in response to the growing Indian gaming industry in the state. Since the establishment of the Tulsa Regional Office in 2000, the number of Indian gaming operations in Oklahoma has nearly doubled. In order to meet the day-to-day challenges, additional assistance has become essential. The decision of where to locate the new Oklahoma office was been made after careful consideration of input from tribes and internal discussions.

With the addition of the new office in Oklahoma, the agency is in the process of renaming all its regional offices. Rather than using a numerical system, the regional offices will now be identified according to the cities in which they are located: the Portland Regional Office, the Sacramento Regional Office, the Phoenix Regional Office, the Oklahoma City Regional Office, the Tulsa Regional Office, the St. Paul Regional Office and the Washington, DC Regional Office.

###

The NIGC is an independent regulatory agency established within the Department of the Interior pursuant to the Indian Gaming Regulatory Act of 1988.