



Notice of Settlement Agreement Entered with the Nooksack Tribe

WASHINGTON, September 11, 2017 – Chairman of the National Indian Gaming Commission (NIGC), Jonodev O. Chaudhuri, entered into a Settlement Agreement on September 8th with Robert Kelly, Chairman of the Nooksack Indian Tribe, relating to the issuance of the Notice of Violations and Closure Order issued June 15, 2017 (NOV-14-02 and TCO-17-02).

The Settlement Agreement allows the Nooksack Northwood Casino to reopen with certain conditions: 1) Chairman Kelly complies with the obligations under his August 25, 2017 Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) with the Department of the Interior (DOI), including holding a timely election acknowledged by Interior's Assistant Secretary-Indian Affairs (AS-IA); 2) the Tribe's net gaming revenue shall be used solely for enumerated governmental expenditures ; 3) all issues raised in the Environmental Protection Agency's administrative orders must be resolved by October 10, 2017; and 4) the parties agree that any violation of the Agreement will result in the imposition of an agreed-upon suspended fine of \$13 million, and failure to comply with the terms of the MOA or correct the EPA violation will result in immediate closure.

“The NIGC understands that gaming operations are a critical source of jobs and services for tribal members and the local community, and therefore we did not take lightly the severity of the closure order imposed in this matter. Since the casino's closure, tribal representatives have resolved significant issues cited in the NOV, and through the MOA with DOI, a path to resolve the Tribe's sole proprietary interest violation is available. The Settlement Agreement ensures that the Tribe's assets and operations, as well as the interests of the public, are protected. With these safeguards in place, I am suspending the closure order so people may return to work and vital programs and services can be restored to all Tribal members.” Chaudhuri said.

Pursuant to the terms of the Settlement Agreement and MOA, the Chairman suspended the temporary closure order effective September 8, 2017 and the \$13M fine levied against the Tribe.

The full Settlement Agreement (SA-17-02) is available [here](#).

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The Indian Gaming Regulatory Act created the [National Indian Gaming Commission](#) to support tribal self-sufficiency and the integrity of Indian gaming. The NIGC has developed four initiatives to support its mission including (1) To protect against anything that amounts to gamesmanship on the backs of tribes; (2) To stay ahead of the Technology Curve; (3) Rural outreach; and (4) To maintain a strong workforce within NIGC and with its tribal regulatory partners. NIGC oversees the efficient regulation of 499 gaming establishments operated by 244 tribes across 28 states. The Commission's dedication to compliance with the [Indian Gaming Regulatory Act](#) ensures the integrity of the growing \$31.2 billion Indian gaming industry. To learn more, visit www.nigc.gov and follow us on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#).