

Next Steps

The 90-day review and comment period for the DEIS began on April 14, 2006 and will conclude on July 14, 2006.

Review and Comment

The Cowlitz Indian Tribe encourages all interested parties to review and comment on the DEIS. A copy of the DEIS can be downloaded at www.analyticalcorp.com. During the 90-day comment period, written comments may be mailed or hand delivered to:

Stanley Speaks, Regional Director
Northwest Regional Office of the Bureau of Indian Affairs
911 NE 11th Avenue
Portland, OR 97232

Public Hearings

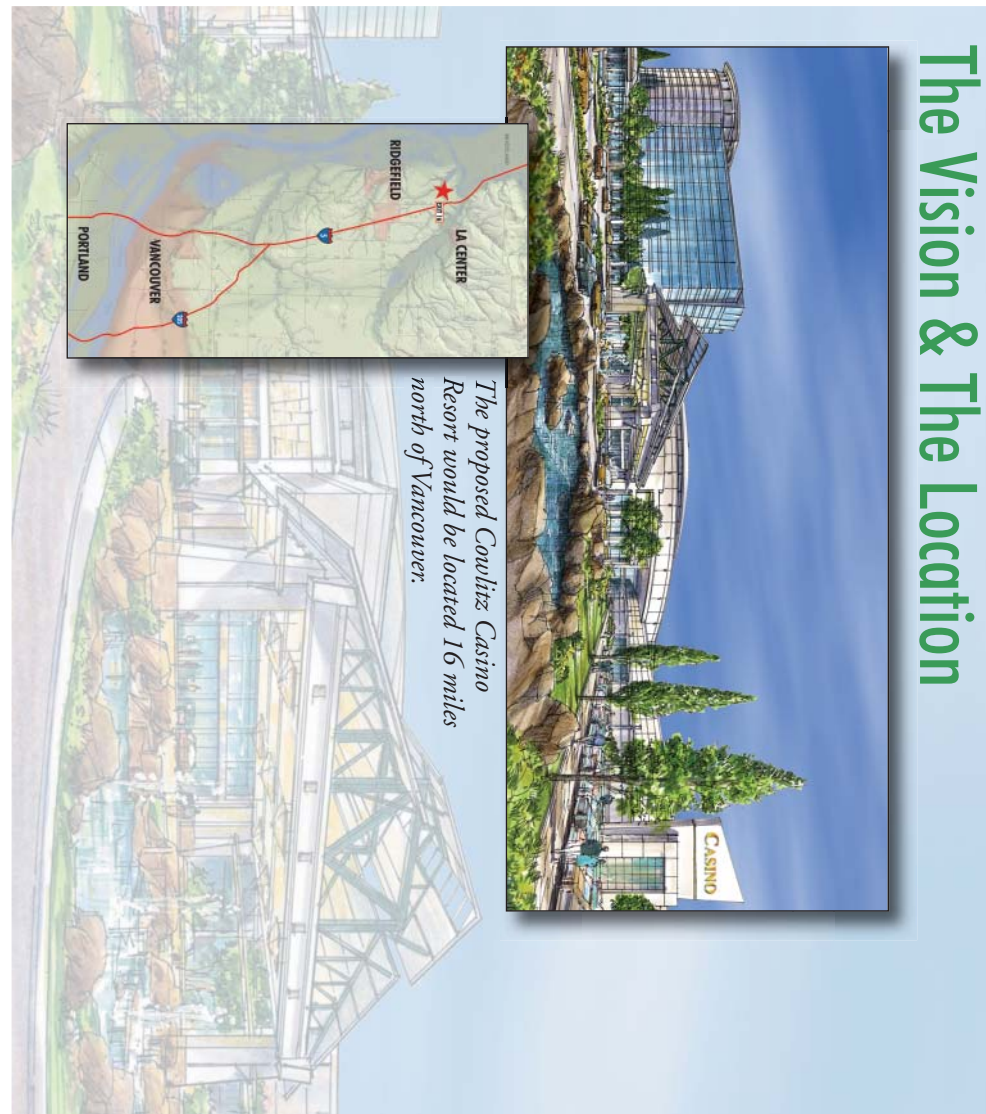
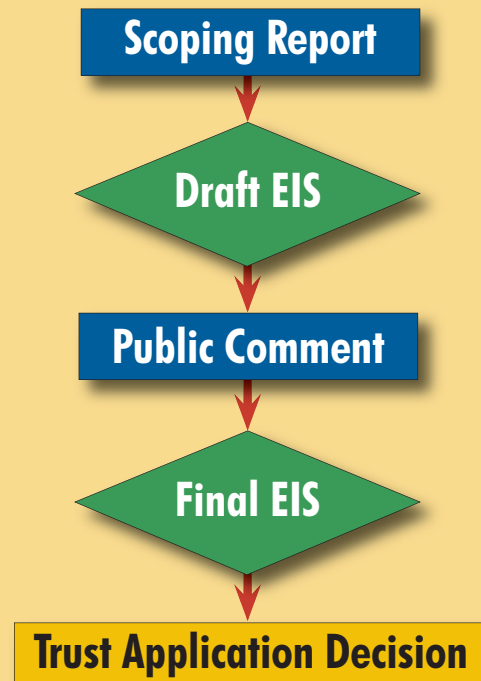
Two public hearings are scheduled for:

Wednesday and Thursday, June 14 and 15, at 6 p.m.
Skyview High School auditorium
1300 NW 139th Street
Vancouver, WA

Final EIS

After close of the comment period, a Final EIS will be released which responds to all substantive comments received on the DEIS. The final EIS will be part of a decision package that is forwarded to Washington, D.C. for consideration by the final decisionmaker for the project: the Assistant Secretary for the Bureau of Indian Affairs.

Environmental Review Process



Cowlitz Indian Tribe
1701 Broadway #192
Vancouver, WA 98663



Cowlitz Casino Resort

A Unique Opportunity for Southwest Washington

DEIS Summary

The Project & The Process

The Cowlitz Tribe is going through the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) process to place 152 acres of land in North Clark County into trust for the betterment of its people and as an economic amenity for the region (see map on back panel). As part of this process, the BIA has contracted with an objective third party to study the impacts of the Tribe's proposed plans, in an environmental impact statement (EIS). The project is anticipated to be constructed in several phases over a number of years. At maximum build-out it could include:

- A casino of up to 134,150 square feet
- Restaurant and retail stores totaling up to 215,685 square feet
- Convention and entertainment facilities of up to 147,500 square feet
- A 250-room hotel
- Tribal government offices, a tribal cultural center, and approximately 16 housing units for Tribal elders
- Parking structures for about 7,250 vehicles and an RV park for 200 recreational vehicles

About the Environmental Impact Statement

The EIS, which includes significant opportunity for public involvement, will examine a variety of potential impacts from the project including effects on geology and soils, water, biological and cultural resources; air quality; socioeconomic conditions; traffic and transportation; land use; public utilities and services; noise; hazardous materials; environmental justice; and visual resources/aesthetics.

We promised to work with the BIA to take a hard look at the potential environmental and other impacts of the Casino Resort. The BIA, as the lead agency, selected an independent third-party contractor to prepare the EIS, and a Draft EIS was released on April 14, 2006, for public review and comment over a 90-day period. The Draft EIS assesses those potential impacts and recommends appropriate mitigation.

The findings of the Draft EIS are summarized in this brochure. The impacts identified in the Draft EIS can be mitigated, and we have made it clear that we will do so.

We are pleased with the quality of the report and remain steadfast in our commitment to mitigate the effects of our project on the land and to our neighbors, including our longtime commitment to improve roads and the I-5 interchange to accommodate increased traffic.

The Tribe welcomes your review and comment on the DEIS. Details on where to find the DEIS and how to comment are included on the back page of this brochure.

Alternative A - Impacts & Suggested Mitigation

The Draft EIS examines the impacts of five development alternatives and a No Action Alternative. Alternative A is the Preferred Alternative, and this table lists the impacts it could have and the mitigation suggested for them. The Tribe has agreed to mitigate all significant impacts. The summary below includes the impacts that have been the source of the greatest public interest. Readers are encouraged to access the full report at www.analyticalcorp.com for additional details.

Resource	Potential Impacts	Mitigation	Impacts after Mitigation
Water Resources			
Stormwater runoff & quality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased stormwater runoff due to increased impervious surfaces (e.g. roofs, concrete). Stormwater control facilities included in project design would reduce peak stormwater flows and filter runoff. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Comply with all provisions of Clean Water Act (CWA). Prepare Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP), implement Best Management Practices (BMP). 	Less than Significant
Wastewater	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> On-site treatment plant would treat/recycle wastewater. Discharge of treated wastewater would comply with most stringent state standards; discharge to seasonal stream on site may improve its water quality. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Comply with all provisions of CWA including National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES). Prepare SWPPP and implement BMP. 	Less than Significant
Air Quality			
Operational emissions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Would result in generation of VOC (volatile organic compounds), NOx (nitrogen oxides), and PM-10 (inhalable particulate matter). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide shuttles to population center transit stations; encourage use of van/carpools. Provide adequate facility ingress/egress to minimize idling and congestion. Implement a program approved by SWCAA to provide compensatory reduction in regional emissions. 	Less than Significant
Biological Resources			
Federally listed animal species	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Eight special status fish species may be affected due to increase in effluent discharge and stormwater runoff into unnamed seasonal stream which flows into the East Fork of the Lewis River. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discharge of treated wastewater to unnamed seasonal stream will require NPDES permit and water quality monitoring. If construction is scheduled Jan. 15–Aug. 1, biologist shall survey for active bald eagle nests within 0.5 mile of project site. If bald eagles observed in immediate project area during construction, Tribe shall contact US Fish and Wildlife Service. Incorporate BMP for stormwater runoff to ensure water quality does not degrade. Monitor stormwater runoff leaving project site to assess water quality. 	Less than Significant
Migratory birds	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> During nesting season, nests could be affected by vegetation removal during construction. Permanent features (e.g., night lighting) may impact. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Remove vegetation only outside nesting season, or have qualified biologist survey area for active migratory bird nests one week before vegetation removal. Optimize downward-directed low-pressure sodium lighting; no strobe lighting. 	Less than Significant
Socioeconomics			
Construction impacts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Construction would generate approximately 4,011 jobs with average wage of \$46,200; total payroll of \$185 million. 	No mitigation necessary	Not applicable
Operational impacts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expected employment of 3,151 employees with average wage of \$28,000 and full benefits; annual payroll of \$88 million. Approximately 90% of employees anticipated to be current Clark or Cowlitz County residents. 	No mitigation necessary	Not applicable
Local jurisdictions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community members would benefit from increased spending and revenues, including sales tax on approximately \$39 million in construction purchases. Memorandum of Understanding with Clark County includes special funds for community benefit, such as 2% for arts and education. 	No mitigation necessary	Not applicable
Property values	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Negative value impacts could occur to nearby properties if they are affected by noise, traffic, shadow, lights, or glare. However, impacts and pressure to convert agricultural land to service economy may increase value of undeveloped land. 	No mitigation necessary	Not applicable
Mini-casinos/cardrooms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Substitution effect is expected to result in 61% decrease in mini-casino revenues to City of La Center. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tribe should enter separate Memorandum of Understanding with City of La Center addressing replacement of fees. 	Less than Significant
Social effects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Four mini-casinos already present in La Center; gambling not new to community. Tribe has agreed to contribute no less than \$50,000 annually to service programs for problem gamblers. No definitive link between casino and increased crime rates; Tribe has committed in MOU to reimburse Clark County and to enter into agreement with Sheriff's Office to reimburse costs of potential increase in demand for law enforcement from increased population (see impacts on law enforcement discussed below). 	No mitigation necessary	Not applicable
Community infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Minimal impacts expected to schools and libraries. Tribe will pay school impact fees to Ridgefield School District if it constructs single or multi-family housing. 	No mitigation necessary	Not applicable
Transportation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Approximately 13,600 added weekday daily trips and 17,800 daily trips on Saturday. Six intersections would operate below Level of Service D (high density, stable flow) during AM, PM, and Saturday peak hours. La Center and Ridgefield interchanges part of High Accident Corridor due to traffic backups on to I-5 mainline. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tribe to make roadway/intersection improvements to maintain traffic Level of Service at existing levels for each project phase and ensure intersections do not operate below Level of Service D for intersection delay during peak traffic hours. DEIS identifies mitigation measures for each intersection and responsibility for payment. Tribe to contribute to City of Ridgefield's project to construct roundabout at Pioneer Street/N 45th Avenue/NW 31st Avenue. Signals added to intersections at NW 319th Street/NW La Center Road and I-5 northbound and southbound ramps. 	Less than Significant
Land Use	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> County has already planned for industrial/urban development on property. 	No mitigation necessary	Not applicable
Public Services			
Water supply	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clark Public Utilities (CPU) has supply & pressure capabilities. At peak day demand, would use approximately 765,000 gallons per day. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recycled water should be maximized to extent possible. Optional mitigation measure: construct on-site wells for potable water supply or contract with City of Ridgefield for water services. 	Less than Significant
Wastewater	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tribe to provide sewage conveyance, treatment, and disposal through development of new independent treatment plant meeting/exceeding federal and state standards. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Optional mitigation measure: service agreement with City of La Center for off-site disposal of wastewater. 	Less than Significant
Law enforcement	Increased population may increase demands on law enforcement.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Agree to reimburse Sheriff's Office for reasonable costs of providing law enforcement, court, and jail services, per Tribal/Clark County MOU. Provide traffic control and on-site security; adopt Responsible Alcohol Beverage Policy. 	Less than Significant
Fire protection/EMS	Operation would add to firefighting responsibilities in the area and increase the need for fire and emergency services.	Agree to reimburse Fire District 12 for costs of providing additional services, per MOU.	Less than Significant
Noise			
Operational noise	On-site operational noise would comply with state limits.	No mitigation necessary	Not applicable
Aesthetics			
Visual impacts	Viewshed B (high-end rural residential houses on large lots) would be impacted.	Integrate screening features in landscaping, including screening views for residents within a medium range north and west of site.	Less than Significant
Shadow, light, & glare	New sources of light would be introduced, but use of downcast and directed lighting, low-pressure sodium bulbs, and strategically positioned lighting fixtures would minimize off-site impacts.	No mitigation necessary	Less than Significant
Community character	Gaming businesses already established in community; with other anticipated developments in area, impacts would be minimal.	No mitigation necessary	Not applicable