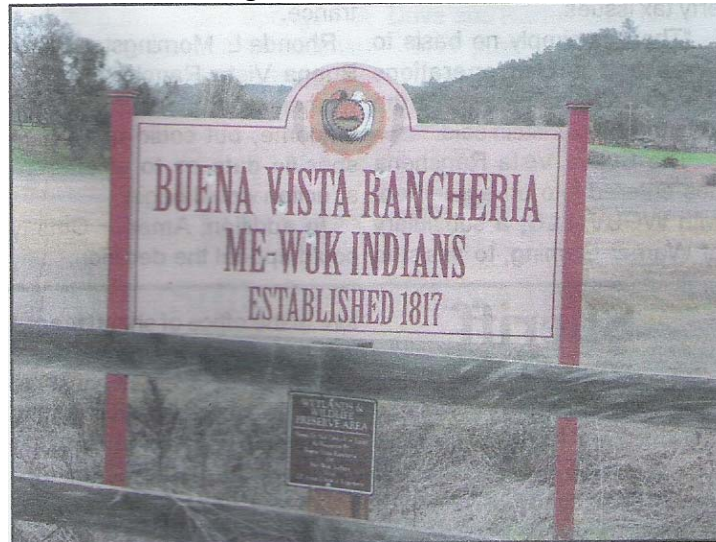


# Proposed Buenavue Casino moves closer to construction

By Nick Baptista / The Valley Springs News / Wednesday, March 30, 2016

Efforts to construct a casino less than 15 miles from Valley Springs received a favorable judgment earlier this month in a Washington, D.C., court.



*Signage off Coal Mine Road denotes the Buena Vista Rancheria - site of a future casino.*

The Buena Vista Rancheria of Me-Wuk Indians of California wants to build a \$150 million, 71,000-square-foot casino on 67 acres of trail land in Amador County off Coal Mine Road near Buena Vista. The County of Amador is opposed to the project.

U.S. District Court Judge Barbara Jacobs Rothstein on March 17 granted a summary judgement to the federal government and in favor of the tribe.

Amador County had claimed the U.S. Secretary of the Interior couldn't approve a 2004 amended gaming compact between the Buena Vista Rancheria of Me-Wuk Indians and the state of California because the rancheria didn't qualify as "Indian land" suitable for a casino under the Indian Gaming Regularity Act.

Judge Rothstein ruled Amador County had agreed in a 1987 stipulated judgement to treat the tribe's lands as a reservation and the Rancheria would be governed by "all the laws" for federally recognized Indians and tribes- despite the county's claim the agreement was limited to property tax issues.

"There is simply no basis to carve out gaming operations from the 'all laws' provision in the judgment," Rothstein said.

The Buena Vista Rancheria has entered into an agreement with WGBV, LLO, a subsidiary of Warner Gaming, to assist in the development, pre-opening and operations of what will be called Buenavue Casino. The facility would have up to 1,650 slot machines and 60 table games. In addition, preliminary plans call for the casino to offer four full-service restaurants and an entertainment lounge.

Site development would include at least 1,000 parking spaces, water and wastewater treatment plants, site utilities, retaining walls, extensive landscaping with site lighting and water feature near the main entrance.

Rhonda L. Morningstar Pope, Buena Vista Rancheria chairwoman, was pleased with the outcome, but could not give a specific date as to when construction would begin.

In addition, Amador County could appeal the decision.