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3E A3 MADERA TRIBUNE Wednesday, September 7, 2005

North Fork Rancheria makes labor agreement for new casino

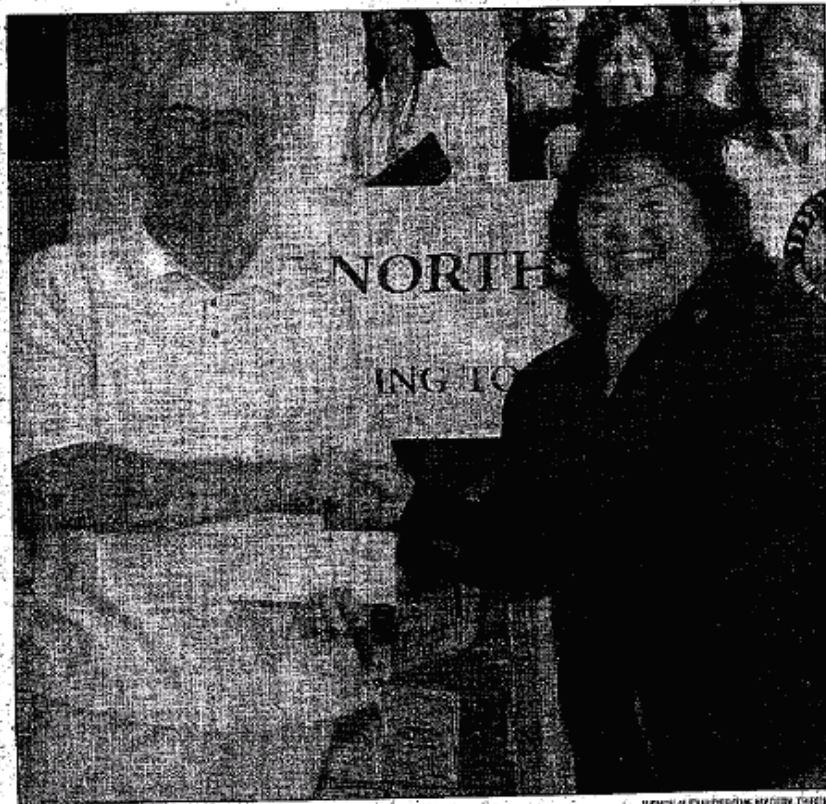
By Ramona Frances
THE MADERA TRIBUNE

The North Fork Rancheria of Mono Indians and the Fresno, Madera, Kings and Tulare Counties Building and Construction Trades Council agreed Tuesday to enter into a project labor agreement for the tribe's construction of the proposed resort casino and hotel project in Madera County.

"With more than 700 construction jobs needed to build this development, the opportunity to reduce unemployment levels in Madera County can only have a positive impact on the community at large," said John Hutson, financial secretary and treasurer of the council. "This agreement provides hope through employment so those working in the local building and construction trades can comfortably support themselves and their families with hundreds of good jobs with living wages and benefits."

The tribe's aim is to work in partnership with labor and other community groups to ensure that the resort is built to high industry standards and to provide jobs with fair wages and benefits in a safe working environment.

"In the spirit of collaboration and bettering the lives of all Madera County residents, we are excited to enter into this partnership with the council," said Elaine Bethel Fink, the North Fork Mono Rancheria tribal chairperson. "Our commitment to provid-



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Elaine Bethel-Fink, chairperson of the North Fork Rancheria Mono Indian tribes, hands a check to Pastor Dennis Darnell, executive director of the Madera Food Bank.

ing economic development opportunities that serve the county and its people will start here — with the construction phase of the project."

The North Fork Rancheria

project is an economic development plan for a gaming and entertainment resort proposed to be built on 55 acres in rural Madera County.

The Building and Construc-

tion Trades are a four-county collection of over 20 construction unions that have a common interest in their community being shared by the North Fork tribes.