



## Fresno Bee ARTICLE

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A revolutionary gaming compact between the Wiyot Tribe and the State of California was signed by Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger and Wiyot Tribal Chairwoman Cheryl A. Seidner today.

The compact, which has been under negotiation for nine years, allows the Wiyot Tribe to join the ranks of many other California tribes who have elected to utilize gaming for economic development, but with an entirely new twist. In this compact the Wiyot Tribe has agreed to forego gaming on its trust land, in exchange for a revenue share with another Tribe - the North Fork Rancheria of Mono Indians.

While it seeks opportunities for economic development, the Wiyot Tribal Council feels it has an obligation to protect its ancestral lands. The Wiyot people have occupied an area ranging from Little River to near Scotia, and inland to Chalk Mountain since time began. Now located along the southern tip of Humboldt Bay at Table Bluff

# Governor Signs Unique Tribal Gaming Measure for Wiyot Tribe

Reservation, the Tribe has been reluctant to build in this ecologically sensitive area.

"The Wiyot Tribe would like to thank Governor Schwarzenegger and our North Fork brothers and sisters for making this historic agreement possible. While some like to focus on conflict between tribes, this agreement is a tribute to what can be achieved through cooperation and mutual respect. We are pleased that we have created a model for economic cooperation that will build a brighter future for each of our tribes, for the state of California and for the environment," said Seidner.

"This compact provides us with economic self-sufficiency that will allow the Tribe to provide for its citizens without compromising its environmental and economic principles. It protects our pristine Humboldt Bay which is a National Wildlife Heritage Area," said Seidner.

The agreement will make it possible for the Wiyot Tribe to bring significant revenue into Humboldt County, and will be able to offer new services to its citizens. The Tribe will also avoid competing with other tribes for limited recreational dollars in the County.

"I commend the Wiyot Tribe and the Schwarzenegger Administration for crafting an agreement which protects the natural resources and environment in and around Humboldt Bay, while expanding the Wiyots' opportunities for economic development to better the lives of their People," said Senator Patricia Wiggins (D-Santa Rosa).

"By forgoing its right to build a casino at Table Bluff, the Wiyot Tribe is helping to protect important and endangered species that live on or nearby tribal lands. In return, they will have greater resources available to meet the needs of tribal members while also expanding economic and job opportunities for business and residents of the Madera region," said Wiggins.

This compact is a first of its kind. The Wiyot Tribe, the State of California and the North Fork Rancheria of Mono Indians have agreed that the Wiyot Tribe will not build or participate in the operation of any gaming facility, and North Fork Rancheria will build and maintain a destination resort in its ancestral territory in Madera County.

Wiyot Tribal Chair-elect Gail Green said that she is "proud of this endeavor, which benefits both Tribes and their communities while avoiding physical impact to the environment" and looks forward to the next phases of this project.

The Tribes will not seek legislative approval of the compacts until the land for the proposed facility is taken into federal trust. The entertainment facility envisioned by the Tribes will include a hotel and spa, restaurants, gift shops, tourist information, casino-style gaming and entertainment lounges among other amenities.

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