



# TOHONO O'ODHAM NATION

OFFICE OF THE CHAIRMAN AND VICE CHAIRMAN

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ALL OF US TOGETHER

OFFICE OF THE CHAIRMAN AND VICE CHAIRMAN

Tohono O'odham Nation

NED NORRIS JR.  
CHAIRMAN

April 16, 2010

ISIDRO LOPEZ  
VICE CHAIRMAN

## UPDATE ON WEST VALLEY RESORT ACTIVITIES

As spring is upon us we wanted to send you a quick note to let you know of the recent developments with the West Valley Resort project.

The Nation filed an application with the Department of Interior in January 2009 to take land in the West Valley into trust so that we can build a resort-casino complex. Since that time we have worked hard to move this process forward. The collaborative work between the Economic Development Delegation, the Legislative Council, and others has been pivotal in getting where we are today. We'd like to thank everyone involved for their efforts and we are committed to continuing to stand up for the rights of our people in this effort.

There are a few recent issues that we have been working on that you should be aware of. They are:

- **HB 2297** – The Arizona State Legislature considered HB 2297, a bill that would allow cities to annex land that a tribe is asking the federal government to hold in trust. The Nation, along with other Arizona tribes (Salt River Pima Maricopa Indian Community, Pascua Yaqui and Hualapai Tribes), strongly opposed this bill. While it narrowly made it out of the House, Senate President Robert Burns killed the bill shortly afterwards. The House has again passed this dangerous legislation and we are working to make sure that it does not pass in the Senate.
- **New poll** – The Nation commissioned a new poll to gauge the level of support in the West Valley for this project. Despite opposition from the City of Glendale and others, the poll clearly shows that residents overwhelmingly support the West Valley Resort. Nearly 70 percent of voters continue to believe this is a good project and these results closely mirror a similar poll that was done one year ago on the project.
- **Department of Interior Lawsuit** – The Tohono O'odham Nation recently filed a lawsuit against the Department of Interior for failing to make a decision on our trust application. The Nation chose to move forward with litigation because of the Department's inaction for more than a year. Even though the Western Regional Office determined in May 2009 that our application meets all of the requirements, the final decision from Washington, D.C. has not occurred. It was a difficult decision to file this lawsuit but we felt that there was no other alternative; the Department has a responsibility to take land into trust for tribes and they are not fulfilling their duty.

For additional information on this process [please visit www.WestValleyOpportunity.com](http://www.WestValleyOpportunity.com) and [www.tonation-nsn.gov](http://www.tonation-nsn.gov) <http://www.tonation-nsn.gov/>

Thank you,

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