

**NOTICE OF FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT
PROPOSED AUGUSTINE RESERVATION CASINO PROJECT**

AGENCY: National Indian Gaming Commission (NIGC)

ACTION: Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI)

SUMMARY:

The Augustine Band of Cahuilla Mission Indians (Tribe) has submitted a request to the NIGC for the approval of a management agreement between the Tribe and Paragon Augustine, LLC, for the operation of a casino complex on existing tribal land.

The proposed 31,200 square-foot gaming and entertainment facility is located on 13 acres within the Augustine Reservation. The proposed federal action is the approval of the management agreement by the NIGC. Approval of this document will allow the Tribe to engage Paragon Augustine, LLC, to operate the proposed gaming facility subject to the conditions of the existing Tribe/State Gaming Compact and this FONSI.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Jim Harriman, Technical Reviewer
National Indian Gaming Commission
1441 L Street NW, Suite 9100
Washington, DC 20005
(703) 625-9164

PUBLIC AVAILABILITY:

The Draft Environmental Assessment (DEA) was reviewed during a thirty-day public comment period and very few comments were received. The Final EA (FEA) for the project has been prepared in full consideration of the comments received. This FONSI and a copy of responses to the public comments will be distributed to all commenting persons and agencies. Additionally, all individuals and organizations on the initial Draft EA mailing list will receive a copy of the FEA. Copies of the FEA are available upon request at the following address.

Augustine Band of Mission Indians
84481 Avenue 54
Coachella, CA 92236

BACKGROUND:

Gaming is a unique opportunity for the Tribe to develop an economic base. This opportunity is afforded the Tribe under the Indian Gaming Regulatory Act (25 U.S.C. 2701 et seq.) and was sanctioned by the State of California through a State/Tribe Gaming Compact approved by the Governor and the Secretary of the Interior.

DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPOSED PROJECT:

The Augustine Casino is a 31,200 square-foot facility located on a 13 acre site in Riverside County, California with access from Avenue 54 and Van Buren Street in the City of Coachella. The facility will contain 700 slots and 10 table games, a restaurant, bar and associated infrastructure/administrative areas. Adjacent parking will be provided for 950 vehicles. The project also includes a 240,000 gallon potable water storage tank and two runoff retention basins on reservation lands.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS:

An EA documenting the planning process and analyzing implementation impacts of the proposed project has been completed. No significant unmitigated adverse environmental impacts are indicated by the EA.


The impact on the quality of the human environment is judged to be of minor adverse impact and significant beneficial economic impact to both the Tribe and the surrounding communities. There are no significant unmitigated impacts on public health and safety. The site contains no eligible or listed National Register of Historic Places sites or any known significant archeological resources, which will be adversely impacted by the project. There are no significant unmitigated adverse impacts on endangered species or their critical habitat. The proposed management contract will have no significant unmitigated impacts on declared wetlands and will not significantly impact water quality or air quality. There are no significant unmitigated impacts on traffic flow.

REQUIRED MITIGATION:

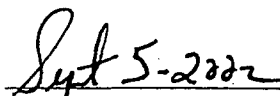
All mitigation measures described in Section 4.0 of the Final EA as being implemented to reduce potentially significant adverse impacts of the project to a point of insignificance, are conditions of the approval of this project. NIGC's approval of the management agreement and signing of this FONSI makes operation of the gaming facility under the proposed management contract contingent upon implementation of these mitigation measures.

DETERMINATION:

In accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and implementing regulations of the Council on Environmental Quality (40 CFR 1500-1508), I find that the proposed federal action, to approve the management agreement between the Augustine Band of Cahuilla Mission Indians and Paragon Augustine, LLC, when the mitigation measures are followed, does not constitute a major federal action that would significantly affect the quality of the human environment within the meaning of NEPA. Therefore, an Environmental Impact Statement is not required for this proposal.



Montie R. Deer, Chairman
National Indian Gaming Commission



Date