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Yocha Dehe Wintun Nation Statement on Vallejo City Council Approval of Preview Casino MOU with Scotts Valley Band of Pomo Indians

Today, the Yocha Dehe Wintun Nation Tribal Council issued the following statement in response to the Vallejo City Council's approval of a controversial Memorandum of Understanding with the Scotts Valley Band of Pomo Indians for the Band's "preview" casino project:

"Tuesday night's decision by the Vallejo City Council to move forward with a Memorandum of Understanding for Scotts Valley's temporary gaming facility raises serious concerns about process, transparency, and public trust," **said the Yocha Dehe Wintun Nation Tribal Council.**

"The City Council pushed this agreement through in a *single* meeting despite clear and repeated calls from community members and Tribal governments for meaningful public engagement. More than 1,000 pages of materials were included in the agenda at the last moment and continued to be updated until minutes before the meeting began, leaving the public with no time to meaningfully review or respond. This is not a process that reflects genuine public engagement or informed decision-making.

Equally concerning, staff's presentation to the Council and public was biased and riddled with inaccuracies, large and small. Among other things, staff failed to disclose the Scotts Valley project may be declared illegal in federal proceedings scheduled to conclude shortly and omitted correspondence from Yocha Dehe raising these concerns. A complete and balanced record is essential for informed decision-making, and that standard was unfortunately not met. At the same time, numerous inaccurate representations that the project can move forward even without the City created a false sense of urgency. In reality, the City permits at issue (also withheld from the public materials) require City approval.

Scotts Valley is not pushing for this agreement because it *wants* to pay the City, it is doing so because it *needs* the City. Unfortunately, the City handed away its rights without getting much in return.

Given this context, the question raised by many remains unanswered: Why move forward now, rather than allow the federal review to run its course? Staff represented to the Council and the public that the temporary casino will not be open for months – without acknowledging this is the same time in which the federal process will most likely be complete. Proceeding at this stage to commit City resources just weeks before the federal decision is complete is irresponsible and shortsighted.

Despite this outcome, we remain deeply grateful to the many community partners, residents, and organizations who showed up and made their concerns heard. Yocha Dehe's relationships with the citizens and organizations in Vallejo have been built over decades, not weeks or months, and are rooted

in trust, partnership, and a shared commitment to this region. We are dedicated to responsible, true, and fair due process, and we thank Mayor Sorce, Councilmember Lediju, and Councilmember Matias for their leadership in providing principled, honest assessments of the agreement and the process surrounding its approval.

Yocha Dehe Wintun Nation has always supported Tribal self-determination and gaming in a Tribe's own ancestral homelands, as intended by California voters. Our commitment to Vallejo and our Patwin ancestral homelands does not change. We will continue to show up, to partner, and to invest in the wellbeing of this region."

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