

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

June 8, 2026

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## **Yocha Dehe Wintun Nation Files Lawsuit Against City of Vallejo Over Preview Casino MOU**

*City Agreed to Provide Scarce City Resources to Pomo Tribe Without Complying with State Law*

**VALLEJO, CA** – The Yocha Dehe Wintun Nation has filed suit against the Vallejo City Council and the City of Vallejo over the City Council’s approval of an Encroachment Permit (Permit) and a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Scotts Valley Band of Pomo Indians related to a proposed temporary casino in Vallejo.

The lawsuit challenges the City’s controversial decision, alleging violations of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and the Cortese-Knox-Hertzberg Local Government Reorganization Act (LAFCO Act). The City failed to perform the required environmental review before approving the MOU and the Permit, instead relying on inapplicable categorical exemptions, in violation of CEQA. In addition, the MOU commits municipal services to the proposed temporary casino on the Pomo tribe’s 160-acre federal trust land without first obtaining Solano LAFCO approval, in violation of the LAFCO Act.

“The City of Vallejo’s decision to rush into a Memorandum of Understanding for the Scotts Valley project while the federal government is actively reconsidering whether the project is legal in the first place completely disregards the rule of law and proper process,” **said Anthony Roberts, Chairman of the Yocha Dehe Wintun Nation.** “We were left with no choice but to file suit, not only to protect our Patwin ancestral homelands, but also to stand up for the thousands of Vallejo residents that deserve thoughtful decision-making grounded in facts and meaningful environmental review.”

“Our Tribe remains deeply committed to the many community partners, residents, and organizations we have worked alongside in Vallejo for decades,” **added Secretary Mia Durham.** “These relationships are rooted in trust, partnership, and a shared commitment to the future of this region. We are proud of the work we continue to do alongside the people of Vallejo and remain committed to strengthening those partnerships for generations to come.”

This lawsuit comes as the federal government continues reconsideration of Scotts Valley’s gaming eligibility determination. In a December letter to Scotts Valley, the Department of the Interior acknowledged that the original approval of Scotts Valley’s proposed casino project may have been

based on “legal error,” noting that evidence submitted by local tribes and other parties “raise[s] questions” about whether the project site qualifies for gaming.

Underscoring the seriousness of those questions, the letter expressly stated that Scotts Valley “would be ill-served” by relying on the prior gaming eligibility determination while the reconsideration process remains ongoing. Despite those warnings, the City moved to facilitate development of a “preview” casino, inserting itself into an ongoing dispute and risking limited City resources prior to a final federal determination.

A final decision by the Department of the Interior regarding Scotts Valley’s gaming eligibility is expected by the end of July, a schedule the Department recently reconfirmed in a federal court filing.

For more information on Scotts Valley’s proposed casino project, visit [protecttribalhomelands.com](https://protecttribalhomelands.com). To learn more about the Yocha Dehe Wintun Nation and its work throughout the region, visit [yochadehe.gov](https://yochadehe.gov).

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