



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Fort Sill Apache Tribe Prepares to Game

The Tribe Will Address the Scoping Meeting's Public Comments and Concerns

Fort Sill Apache Reservation, Akela, New Mexico (April 6, 2012) – The Fort Sill Chiricahua Warm Springs Apache Tribe ([Fort Sill Apache Tribe](#)) Scoping Meeting in Deming, New Mexico on Wednesday night gave southwest New Mexico residents the opportunity to hear the Tribe's casino plans in compliance with a Section 20 two-part determination process under the Indian Gaming Regulatory Act (IGRA).

As required by the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), a report is being prepared discussing the potential environmental issues of the Tribe's casino project.

Water experts from Intera and traffic experts from Bohannon Huston joined the Tribe in presenting environmental, traffic, market analysis and jurisdiction logistics for the casino project. Comments from the community ranged from waste water removal to utilities and security. According to the Tribe, the proposed 30,000 sq ft casino will bring 245 jobs and economic development to the southwest New Mexico rural community.

“I am pleased that the residents of Luna County continue to show their support for our Tribe and our casino project,” said Fort Sill Apache Tribal Chairman Jeff Haozous. “The comments received from participants at the Scoping Meeting will help us to thoroughly address the issues in the environmental document. The Tribe wants to continue to be a positive neighbor in the community of Deming and Luna County.”

A document will be available for public review later this year.

In 1968, the U.S. Indian Claims Commission (ICC) determined that the Fort Sill Apache Tribe was the legal successors of the Apache Indians that once lived in southwestern New Mexico and southeastern Arizona until their forced removal after the surrender of one of their leaders, Geronimo.

The ICC went on to find that the Tribe was in possession of 14 million acres of land in New Mexico and Arizona and that this land was illegally taken from the Tribe. These landmark decisions were approved by the U.S. Supreme Court.



While they always maintained their status as a Tribe, their government-to-government relationship with the United States, which was severed during the imprisonment, was restored in 1976 when they organized with a constitution as the federally recognized Fort Sill Apache.

After receiving an invitation from the Governor of New Mexico in 1995 and again in 2000 to return to New Mexico, the Tribe purchased the property at Akela Flats in 1998 and was granted a Reservation in November 2011. The Tribe is seeking equality with other New Mexico Tribes and Pueblos to game on its property.

###

Media Contacts:

Fort Sill Apache Tribal Chairman Jeff Haozous; jeff@fortsillapache-nsn.gov; 575-694-2293

Catherine Wambach; CWambach@dwtturner.com; 505-888-5877