

**THE GUN LAKE TRIBE**



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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## **President Obama Signs New Law to Reaffirm Status of Gun Lake Tribe's Land**

### *Tribe Thanks Locals and Congress for Support*

(Bradley, Mich.) – Today, the Match-E-Be-Nash-She-Wish Band of Pottawatomi Indians (Gun Lake Tribe) announced that President Obama has signed S. 1603 that reaffirms the trust status of the tribal land upon which the Gun Lake Casino is located. The U.S. Senate approved the legislation on June 19, 2014, and the House of Representatives gave final approval of the bill on September 16, 2014. The law bars current and future legal challenges to the status of the Tribe's 147-acre parcel of land in Bradley, Michigan.

“This is a historic day for the Tribe and Indian Country. This new law not only reaffirms the trust status of our land, but also permanently ends the frivolous legal challenges that our Tribe and the local community have faced for more than ten years,” said D.K. Sprague, Chairman of the Gun Lake Tribe. “We are pleased that Congress and the President of the United States have vindicated our position.”

Sen. Debbie Stabenow sponsored S. 1603 which was co-sponsored by Sen. Carl Levin. Michigan's two senators provided critical leadership in getting the legislation through the U.S. Senate. The Tribe's land is located within Rep. Fred Upton's congressional district and his leadership led to securing swift passage in the U.S. House.

“This is a victory for jobs and the economy here in Southwest Michigan. Having passed the House by a bipartisan two-to-one margin, this legislation reaffirms once and for all the Department of Interior's action of taking this land into trust,” said Rep. Upton. “The Gun Lake Tribe has created more than 1,000 jobs here in Allegan County and has shared revenues with the local municipality and schools.”

“This legislation addresses a technical issue created by a recent court decision, and I was pleased to support the community in passing this bill to promote economic development in the region,” said Senator Debbie Stabenow, the chief sponsor of the bill.

The Tribe has always enjoyed the support of the local and state governments, as well as countless business and community organizations. Today, the Tribe expressed gratitude to the many people who have supported its rights, including operation of the Gun Lake Casino.

“On behalf of the Tribe, I want to thank our congressional delegation, particularly Sen. Debbie Stabenow and Congressman Fred Upton, for their efforts in getting this legislation passed by the U.S. Congress. I also want to thank Assistant Secretary of Indian Affairs Kevin Washburn for his strong and steadfast support of this legislation. This legislation would not have been possible, however, without the support of many local people and organizations. I want to specifically thank Supervisor Roger VanVolkinburg, Representative Bob Genetski, and Sheriff Blaine Koops,” said Chairman Sprague.

The new law obviates a federal lawsuit filed by one local resident against the U.S. Department of Interior. It also precludes any future lawsuit or legal challenge to the land on which the Gun Lake Casino is located. Text of the law is available for review online at <https://beta.congress.gov/113/bills/s1603/BILLS-113s1603rh.pdf>.

Review of the process for passage of S. 1603 is available online at [https://beta.congress.gov/bill/113th-congress/senate-bill/1603/actions?q={%22search%22%3A\[%22s+1603%22\]}](https://beta.congress.gov/bill/113th-congress/senate-bill/1603/actions?q={%22search%22%3A[%22s+1603%22]}).

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#### **About Gun Lake Tribe**

The Match-E-Be-Nash-She-Wish Band of Pottawatomi Indians (Gun Lake Tribe) has a rich history in West Michigan and close connection to the lands near Gun Lake Casino. The Bradley Indian Mission, located less than 3 miles from the Casino site, is the historic residential and cultural center point of the tribal community. The Tribe’s ancestors, and political predecessors, signed treaties with the United States government dating back to 1795. The Tribe was re-affirmed to federal recognition in 1999. Gun Lake Casino provided badly needed jobs and economic development to the tribal community and people of West Michigan. For more information about the Tribe visit [www.mbpi.org](http://www.mbpi.org).

#### **About Gun Lake Casino**

Gun Lake Casino is located off Exit 61 on U.S. 131, halfway between Grand Rapids and Kalamazoo. The Casino features 1,500 slot machines, 33 table games, and a food court that includes Johnny Rockets and Villa Pizza. Sandhill Café is a 225-seat signature restaurant that is open 24 hours per day, seven days a week. The Casino has bars, lounges, and live entertainment at Stage 131.

Gun Lake Casino is owned by the Match-E-Be-Nash-She-Wish Band of Pottawatomi Indians and is operated by the Tribe’s management partner, MPM Enterprises, L.L.C., owned by an affiliate of Station Casinos, LLC and private investors from Michigan. For more information about the Casino visit [www.gunlakecasino.com](http://www.gunlakecasino.com).