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## **BUENA VISTA TRIBE ASKS FOR MORE PUBLIC INPUT IN NEW ENVIRONMENTAL REPORT PROCESS**

*Chairwoman Rhonda L. Morningstar Pope says the Tribe will address the community's concerns*

**IONE, Calif.**—The Buena Vista Rancheria of Me-Wuk Indians on Friday announced plans to begin a new environmental report for its proposed Gaming and Entertainment Facility on Tribal land near Ione. The Tribal Environmental Impact Report (TEIR) process is required as part of the Tribe's amended compact with Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger, and is the process with which local government agencies comment on off-Reservation impacts of the Tribe's proposed gaming facility.

“We are starting the TEIR process over and we look forward to hearing from the leaders of Amador County,” said Rhonda L. Morningstar Pope, Tribal Chairwoman. “We want to hear the community's concerns, and we want this process to help answer residents' questions. Starting this process over is part of our commitment to being good neighbors to the people of Amador County.”

The Notice of Preparation is the first public document of the Tribe's new TEIR process, which will include initial opportunities for official government input and public comment until March 13. Amador County public officials are welcome to provide comments regarding the off-Reservation environmental issues and reasonable mitigation measures that they think the Tribe should address in the subsequent Draft TEIR. The public will also have opportunities to submit public comment to the Tribe throughout the TEIR process.

In November 2005, Governor Schwarzenegger's legal affairs office asked the Tribe to rescind its previous certification of its Final TEIR document. The Tribe agreed not only to rescind its Final TEIR certification, but to begin the process anew in 2006. The Tribe recently hired environmental consultant firm Jones & Stokes to help manage the new TEIR process.

“It's a new year, and we're starting this process over,” said Chairwoman Pope. “We've listened to the people of Amador County and to the Governor of the State of California. This new process will include everyone.”

The Buena Vista Tribe is located on 67.5 acres of Tribal land near Ione, Calif., within the boundaries of the Tribe's original reservation. The Me-Wuk Indians have lived on the Tribe's land since at least 1817.

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