



## Ground breaking for new casino in Allegan County

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ALLEGAN COUNTY, Mich. (NEWSCHANNEL 3) – A new project in Allegan county holds the promise of hope as ground is broken for a new casino.

After a nearly ten year fight, the Gun Lake Tribe is ready to bring a new casino to West Michigan.

The plan has been in the works since 1999. The tribe wanted to put the casino on a piece of land along 131, but first the land needed to go into trust, and that's not the only hurdle the tribe faced.

Over the years, several groups filed lawsuits seeking to block the casino.

The Gun Lake Casino is now a reality, not just as a logo on a water bottle or a t-shirt, but on actual property in Wayland Township.

The ground-breaking ceremony began with a song, and then the Tribal Chairman put an end to ten years of delays and lawsuits with three words.

"Here we go," said D.K. Sprague.

The Gun Lake Tribe will build an 83,000 square foot facility off US-131. The tribe calls it Phase One, and it's half the size of the original project as a concession to the state's economy.

Patience and perseverance were the themes of the morning, from the 10,000 friends of the Gun Lake Indians to the tribe members themselves.

Now, what started as talk inside a restaurant in Lansing is a reality, one that looks to create quite a few jobs; 750 during construction, 600 full-time positions at the casino and 1,000 spin-off jobs.

"I will tell you, with more than 1,200 slot machines, 36 table games, 300 seat restaurant, entertainment venue, this project's going to provide everything that anybody going out for a night of entertainment is going to need.

The tribe's only obstacle now is the ten to twelve months of construction.

"I've got the whole gamut of feelings, happiness, sadness, elation," said Sprague. "It's finally happened."

The tribe is hopeful that once the economy improves, they can move forward with phases two and three of construction. That would expand the casino to its original size and the 2,500 jobs originally planned.