

Indian casinos compete for music acts; Tahoe-Reno impacted

By Carla Meyer, Sacramento Bee

On Saturday night, John Fogerty will play at Yolo County's Cache Creek Casino Resort while his ex-bandmates play Lincoln's Thunder Valley Casino Resort as Creedence Clearwater Revisited.

"I thought that was very ironic," Cache Creek entertainment manager Ben Slaght said of the Creedence Clearwater overflow. "It is like having the Rolling Stones with Mick (Jagger) and Keith (Richards) on one stage and the Rolling Stones with Bill Wyman" on another stage.

"It is not ironic, it is intentional," Thunder Valley spokesman Doug Elmets said. Upon learning Cache Creek had booked Fogerty to open its new venue, Thunder Valley sought its own piece of the Creedence crowd. "It is a competitive market out there."

Competition and the economy are reshaping the concert scene in Northern California and Northern Nevada. Tapping a level of act once more commonly found in Reno and Lake Tahoe casinos, Cache Creek and Thunder Valley also are drawing from a huge baby boomer market.

Boomers buoyed the concert business in 2010, when overall receipts decreased 12 percent, but Bon Jovi and the Eagles ranked among top ticket sellers, according to concert magazine Pollstar.

"The (first) goal is to provide an entertainment option for the region," Elmets said of Thunder Valley's amphitheater,

which will hold boomer favorites the Beach Boys and Chicago and, like Cache Creek's venue, is a "seasonal" structure built atop a parking lot. "Goal two is to get people of a particular demographic to come to the casino – either gambling or going to the restaurants or the spa."

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