

Letter: Tribe should rethink gun range

To the community,

A 29-lane outdoor commercial gun range and tactical live-fire shoot house is being built by the Shingle Springs Band of Miwok Indians on recently-acquired off-reservation trust land located at the southeast corner of Highway 50 and Shingle Springs Drive. The proposed range will be within 1,000 yards of two public elementary schools and a church, and within 100 yards of thousands of drivers on Highway 50, and backing directly to dozens of private residences. This is the wrong location for an outdoor commercial gun range. Neighbors directly downrange from the site have said that they will need to leave their homes once the range is operational due to safety and sound impact concerns.

The issue is not one of gun rights, but one of safety and choice of location.

If allowed to proceed as proposed, this project sets a dangerous precedent for the use of off-reservation trust land in California.

If anyone other than the tribe were to propose this project at this location, it would not be approved according to El Dorado County's zoning laws and noise and safety ordinances. However, due to its sovereign nation status, the tribe does not need to receive review, approval, or permitting as required of all other commercial projects proposed in the county.

This is not your standard gun range. The tribe is accountable to no one other than the Tribal Council for the planning, building, or operation of the range. The gun range is a part of the overall marketing plan to bring business to the Red Hawk Casino. A casino-fed gun range business run by the tribe

with zero county oversight is not a recipe for a safe gun range.

The El Dorado County Board of Supervisors has essentially stated that they don't believe they have jurisdiction to stop the project from proceeding. The tribe is moving forward with construction, with a proposed completion date of summer 2015.

We fully acknowledge and recognize the sovereignty of the tribe, but are asking them to be good neighbors and consider building an indoor range, choose a more appropriate location, or consider an alternate proposal that would preserve the quality of life and safety for all concerned. The surrounding community has voiced its concerns, but has been met with little cooperation, and to date has received no modifications to the proposal from the tribe.

Go online for more detail on the issue.

Damon Tribble, El Dorado Hills