



Mashpee Wampanoag Tribe
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Mashpee Wampanoag Tribe Announces Major Advance for Taunton Casino Project

Environmental Impact Report Published, “Key Milestone” Keeps Casino on Fast Track

(TAUNTON, MA – June 18, 2013) -- The [Mashpee Wampanoag Tribe](#) announced today the recent publication of a Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) for [Project First Light](#), marking the passage of an additional milestone and keeping the tribe’s resort destination casino project on pace to start construction next year.

“We are pleased to provide this comprehensive analysis of our proposed destination resort casino in Taunton,” said Mashpee Wampanoag Tribal Chairman Cedric Cromwell. “The publication of this report is a critical step forward and helps us keep this project on track to bring thousands of jobs to southeastern Massachusetts.”

The tribe has submitted the Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) on Project First Light in accordance with the Massachusetts Environmental Policy Act, and after a review and study of concerns from officials and residents who attended several public meetings held in recent months.

The Mashpee Wampanoag, a federally-recognized Indian tribe that has historically resided in southeastern Massachusetts, is proposing to build a casino, hotels, restaurants, shops, a family water park, and an events center on a 151-acre site in Taunton. Project First Light will be built on lands taken into trust by the federal Department of the Interior.

The construction phase of the project is expected to generate over 1,000 jobs and approximately \$837 million in total economic activity in Massachusetts. Once completed, the resort’s operation is expected to generate more than 3,500 full and part-time jobs as well as nearly \$512 million in economic activity each year.

The Mashpee Wampanoag are known as the “People of the First Light,” hence the project’s name. The tribe has both a strong and long tradition of natural resource conservation, which is also reflected in the project planning. Since the environmental review process began, the tribe has continued to refine the project’s design to avoid and minimize various impacts to the city.

For example, on-site impacts to wetlands and other water resources have been minimized as a large majority of the development will be constructed on areas that have already been disturbed. Development will also make adaptive reuse of two existing buildings on-site.

The tribe has also worked with city of Taunton and state officials on an ongoing basis to improve traffic flow in the area, including improvements to the Route 24/140 interchange. These were the subject of a recent public forum with both the Taunton City Council and the city's Mayor last month.

The DEIR was submitted to the Massachusetts MEPA office on May 15th, and can be found online by clicking here: [First Light DEIR](#) or by visiting the Tribe's website: <http://mwtribe.exstream.tv/firstlightresort>.

About the Mashpee Wampanoag Tribe:

The Mashpee Wampanoag Tribe, also known as the People of the First Light, has inhabited present day Massachusetts for more than 12,000 years. After an arduous process lasting more than three decades, the Mashpee Wampanoags were re-acknowledged as a federally recognized tribe in 2007 and retain full tribal sovereignty rights. The Mashpee tribe currently has approximately 2,600 enrolled citizens.

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