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Mashpee Tribe Applauds Decision in Cowlitz Case

(MASHPEE, MA - April, 3, 2017) – The Mashpee Wampanoag tribe is applauding a major victory for the Cowlitz tribe today over Indian casino opponents in Washington State.

The Cowlitz Tribe has been working to bring a casino to its tribal land for several years and has faced stiff opposition from several groups.

Today, the U.S. Supreme Court denied a petition to review a lower court decision that upheld the U.S. Department of Interior's authority to take land into trust on behalf of the tribe, rebuffing a series of legal challenges filed by tribal casino opponents.

“The U.S. Supreme Court's decision blazes a trail forward for Mashpee,” said Mashpee Wampanoag Tribal Council Chairman Cedric Cromwell. “The Cowlitz decision is now the law of the land and future challenges to that standard are unlikely to prevail.”

Today's Supreme Court decision is seen as a positive development for the \$1 billion First Light Resort & Casino, which has faced similar challenges.

“The time to cut the red tape is here,” Chairman Cromwell said. “We are ready to deliver thousands of jobs, tens of millions of dollars in critical traffic infrastructure improvements, and hundreds of millions of dollars toward urban renewal.”

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 Wampanoag were re-acknowledged as a federally recognized tribe in 2007. In 2015, the federal government declared 150 acres of land in Mashpee and 170 acres of land in Taunton as the Tribe's initial reservation, on which the Tribe can exercise its full tribal sovereignty rights. The Mashpee tribe currently has approximately 2,600 enrolled citizens.

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