

## **Update on Status of Proposed Star Lake Resort and Casino Development**

The permitting process began for the White Earth Nation proposed Star Lake Resort and Casino project in 2016. However, permits cannot be considered until the environmental review process is complete. Specifically, the next step involves an Environmental Assessment Worksheet (EAW) to be submitted and reviewed. Public comments will be an integral part of the decision making process.

Ultimately, Otter Tail County officials will make a decision on the EAW to determine if they have enough information to move forward with other permits or require that an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) be completed by White Earth Nation.

Below is a summary of the county environmental review and permitting process as confirmed by Mr. Bill Kalar, Otter Tail County Land and Resources Management:

- White Earth Nation (WEN) and Otter Tail County engineering firms are meeting to review together the items that were incomplete in the initial Environmental Assessment Worksheet (EAW) submission;
- When engineering review is done (Star Lake Concerned Citizens Group anticipates in February or March), EAW goes to the Otter Tail County board for review;
- If OTC Commissioners deem EAW complete it is sent to the Environmental Quality Board (EQB is a Minnesota state agency that monitors all environmentally sensitive development proposals) for publication in the EQB Monitor;
- Publication in the EQB Monitor starts the 30-Day OTC Public Comment Period;
- The Conditional Use Permit (CUP) will be readdressed by the county Planning Commission when the EAW comment period is closed and OTC Commissioners have decided on whether an Environmental Impact Statement is required;
- Minnesota requires a wetlands replacement application on the fee land where much of the infrastructure would go under the Minnesota Wetlands Conservation Act (WCA) - a wetlands replacement application will be reopened in conjunction with the CUP review;
- After the Planning Commission reviews the CUP, its recommendation is given to the County Board for consideration. Both the Planning Commission and County Board Meetings are open to the public;
- The County Board decision on a CUP is subject to a 30-Day Appeal Period;
- During the Appeal Period any appeal(s) on a CUP decision may be filed.

Whether you live in, or vacation in, Otter Tail County it is important that you stay informed about this project and provide feedback to OTC officials during the respective public comment periods. For more information visit the Star Lake Concerned Citizens Group website at [www.slccg.info](http://www.slccg.info).