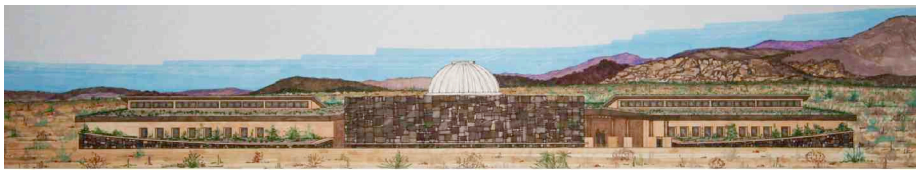

Proposed Observatory and Nature Center adjacent to Joshua Tree National Park

SKY'S THE LIMIT
Observatory and Nature Center

A Committee of the Basin Wide Foundation

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SKY'S THE LIMIT WELCOMES THE RETURN OF THE 29 PALMS BAND OF MISSION INDIANS

Twentynine Palms, CA – Sky's The Limit, the non-profit organization dedicated to building an *Observatory and Nature Center* adjacent to Joshua Tree National Park in Twentynine Palms, welcomes the return of the 29 Palms Band of Mission Indians and encourages their desire to be "Stewards of the High Desert."

The Tribe, whose elder blessed the land during the recent Groundbreaking Ceremony for the *Observatory and Nature Center*, today announced construction of the *Nüwü Casino Resort & RV Park* on its nearby 160 acre reservation. ("Nüwü" is an ancient Chemehuevi Indian word for "The People.") The first phase of construction, set for completion in December 2008, will include the casino, RV park and miles of dedicated hiking trails.

"We believe the 29 Palms Band of Mission Indians are dedicated to maintaining the spirit and the beauty of the land. We share a love of our dark, starry skies, and are pleased that they regard their preservation as a top priority," says Sky's The Limit committee co-chair Jerri Hagman. In addition to meeting stringent night sky ordinances, the Tribe is utilizing cutting edge exterior lighting technology to further reduce its impact on what it recognizes as "one of the region's biggest attractions."

"We are very pleased with the level of involvement we've had and their willingness to listen to the community," states Jerry Mattos, who also co-chairs the Sky's The Limit organization. "They have impressed us with their desire to create an environmentally responsible development, and one that will be of great economic benefit to the area." Of special interest to Sky's The Limit is the RV Park that will expand the ability of visitors to camp nearby the Observatory and Nature Center. "Many of our educational programs will be at night, so having new accommodations which keep people out under the dark night sky can only add to their impact."

A critical aspect of the Observatory and Nature Center is its use of ecologically sound building techniques and its emphasis on renewable energy, goals which are shared by the Tribe as they consider the use of solar and state-of-the-art technologies to help reduce their greenhouse gas emissions. This is good news to the project's design consultant, Ann Congdon, who observes that their efforts "will help us keep the spotlight on the need to consider our environment first and foremost, especially because of our fragile desert ecosystems."

"We look forward to a wonderful relationship," says Jerri Hagman. "We have the same goal in mind; to honor what has come before us while looking to the future with respect. It's been centuries since they could call this home, and it's about time."

For more information on Sky's The Limit, visit www.skysthelimit29.org. For more information on *Nüwü Casino Resort & RV Park* visit www.nuwucasino.com.

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