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Candidates who received tribal money fared well

Team 2006 funds

Receipts and Expenditures of Team 2006, sponsored by California Sovereign Indian Nations:

The Team 2006 coffers were built with funds from:

Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians, \$2.85 million
Pechanga Band of Luiseño Indians, \$2.8 million
San Manuel Band of Mission Indians, \$685,715
Soboba Band of Luiseño Indians, \$125,000
Sycuan Band of Kumeyaay Indians, \$2.8 million

Team 2006 made independent expenditures to help:

Tony Strickland, candidate for Controller: \$958,480
Assemblywoman Bonnie Garcia, R-Cathedral City: \$370,333
Sen. Jeff Denham, R-Atwater: \$494,346
Assemblywoman Shirley Horton, R-Chula Vista: \$281,396
Assemblyman Guy Houston, R-San Ramon: \$186,727
Assemblywoman Jenny Oropeza, D-Long Beach: \$51,007
Assemblywoman Nicole Parra, D-Hanford: \$437,875
Assemblywoman Nell Soto, D-Pomona: \$36,490
Assemblywoman Audra Strickland, R-Moorpark: \$121,520

While the Team 2006 press release lists its supporters as the Agua Caliente, Sycuan, Pechanga and San Manuel Band, the group's filing with the secretary of state also includes Santa Ynez Band of Chumash Indians of Santa Ynez and the Soboba Band of Luiseno Indians of San Jacinto.

All but the Sycuan are members of Tribal Alliance of Sovereign Indian Nations, or TASIN, made up of Southern California tribes of which many operate casinos.****See Below

[Jake Henshaw and Debra Gruszecki](#)

The Desert Sun
November 9, 2006

A coalition of wealthy tribes, including the Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians, backed mostly winners favorable to their state gambling agreements in Tuesday's general election.

The group spent \$2.9 million on TV buys, mailings and other independent actions to aid

nine candidates, including Assemblywoman Bonnie Garcia, R-Cathedral City, during the campaign season that ended Tuesday.

And it still has \$6.3 million in the bank.

"No one ever said Team 2006 was going away after the election," said Jacob Mejia, a spokesman for the tribal independent election committee. In a prepared statement, Team 2006 spokesman Daniel Tucker said his group wants to move "past the campaign rhetoric" to work with state leaders.

"The compacts are important not only for our people but all California taxpayers," said Tucker, who is also chairman of the Sycuan Band of Kumeyaay Indians. "The compacts will generate more than \$20 billion for education, roads, public safety and other state programs."

Labor groups, which crossed swords in the Capitol this year with tribes, said Team 2006 didn't defeat anyone with its campaign spending and barely saved Garcia, who led the fight in the Legislature for tribal gambling interests.

"I don't think they drove fear into anybody's heart" with their campaign spending, said Art Pulaski, the chief executive of the California Labor Federation.

Team 2006 is funded by the Agua Caliente, which owns and operates Agua Caliente Casino near Rancho Mirage and Spa Resort Casino in Palm Springs; Pechanga Band of Luiseño Indians, San Manuel Band of Mission Indians, Soboba Band of Luiseño Indians and Sycuan of Kumeyaay Indians.

In this year's legislative session, four of the tribes - Agua Caliente, Pechanga, San Manuel and Sycuan - failed to win approval from state lawmakers for revised tribal-state gambling agreements known as compacts.

The Morongo Band of Mission Indians, which is not a member of Team 2006, also has a revised compact pending.

The compacts, which would have allowed the tribes to add between 3,000 and 5,500 slot machines to the maximum of 2,000 they can now operate, stalled primarily over collective bargaining.

Democratic leaders, at the urging of unions, refused to approve the revised compacts the tribes had negotiated with Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger.

Asked Wednesday if the tribes' campaign spending, which supported twice as many Republicans as Democrats, would affect the compacts' prospects in the next legislative session, Assembly Speaker Fabian Núñez, D-Los Angeles, dismissed any connection.

But the speaker, along with Senate leader Don Perata, D-Oakland, suggested that they need some changes.

"Clearly, when we come back in January - obviously, the governor is going to have to rehash some of these compacts - but we are going to do what's right based on what's good public policy, not based on whether or not a message was delivered or not delivered" in the tribes' election spending, Núñez said.

Tribes have indicated in the past that they don't want to make any changes to the

compacts, and a spokesman for Schwarzenegger said the governor still supports them.

"The governor continues to stand by the compacts he signed and feels they are good for the state, tribes and local communities," said Darrel Ng.

The only statewide candidate to receive Team 2006 support and lose was Republican Tony Strickland, who was defeated by Democrat John Chiang for state controller.

Tribe announces support of Prop 84

Jake Henshaw and Debra Gruszecki

Desert Sun Sacramento Bureau

October 19, 2006

SACRAMENTO - Money is starting to flow out of a campaign committee set up by the Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians of Palm Springs and five other tribes.

And on the day the campaign committee issued its first press release the Palm Springs-based Agua Caliente said that it, as a tribe, will be supporting at least one bond measure on the November ballot, Proposition 84.

The \$5.4 billion bond would provide money for a wide variety of water, parks and coastal projects including \$47 million the Salton Sea and \$36 million for Coachella Valley Conservancy.

"Tribes across California understand that the time is right for stepping up to support the environmental infrastructure that's needed," Agua Caliente Chairman Richard M. Milanovich said in a prepared statement.

"Our tribe has more than 31,000 acres covering Palm Springs, Cathedral City, Rancho Mirage and into the mountains where we have committed to preserving and protecting critical habitat," said Milanovich.

"It's vital for us to invest in the environment for the benefit of our communities and families."

The tribe wouldn't disclose the amount it will contribute, and it hasn't yet been reported on the Secretary of State's Web site.

Other Team 2006 tribes also are expected to support some of the five bonds on the ballot individually, not as the campaign committee, according to a press release released by the group Wednesday.

In addition to Proposition 84, there are \$37.3 billion in bonds for roads and transit, education, affordable housing and flood protection.

The "Team 2006, Sponsored by California Sovereign Indian Nations" press release, the six-tribe group's first public comment on its activities, said that it will be contributing to both Republican and Democratic candidates.

In Wednesday's release, it announce that it had spent \$61,340 on TV production, mailers and surveys to support reelection of two Republican Assembly members, Shirley Horton of Chula Vista and Audra Strickland of Moorpark.

Team 2006 spokesman Daniel Tucker said in the release that the money will be going to candidates "who understand the challenges facing Native Americans and who care about moving California's economy forward.

"A strong economy is important to all Californians, including Native American families," said Tucker, who also is chairman of the Sycuan Band of Kumeyaay Indians.

The Sycuan has donated \$800,000 to Team 2006, the only contribution to the group reported so far.

Tucker didn't return a call requesting more information on criteria the group will use selecting candidates.

But Milanovich said in August that Team 2006 had been meeting weekly since April to plot strategy in dealing with Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger on revised state-tribal gambling agreements.

The governor, the Aguas and several other tribes including the Morongo Band of Mission Indians, the Pechanga Band of Luiseño Indians and the San Manuel Band of Serrano Mission Indians had been at odds over compact revisions to allow expanded gambling.

But in August, Schwarzenegger and these tribes signed new gambling agreements that, among other things, allowed more slot machines in casinos.

The Aguas, under its new compact, would have added 3,000 to the 2,000 it already is authorized to operate.

But the Legislature refused to ratify the compacts, and now the tribes are preparing to seek approval when the Legislature reconvenes in January.

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All but the Sycuan are members of Tribal Alliance of Sovereign Indian Nations, or TASIN, made up of Southern California tribes of which many operate casinos.

Some of the tribes also have been making other individual campaign contributions this year. For example, the Agua Caliente donated \$450,000 to the Riverside County Republican Party, which used the money to run TV ads about the past legislative voting record of Democrat Steve Clute.

Clute is trying to unseat incumbent Assemblywoman Bonnie Garcia, R-Cathedral, who represents the 80th Assembly District that covers the eastern Coachella Valley and Imperial County.