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SNOQUALMIE, MUCKLESHOOT TRIBES CLOSE HISTORIC DEAL TO TRANSFER SALISH LODGE AND LAND

Transaction lauded as a positive development for both tribes

Snoqualmie, WA. – The Snoqualmie and Muckleshoot Indian Tribes announced an historic agreement to transfer ownership of the Salish Lodge & Spa, as well as the land surrounding Snoqualmie Falls, to the Snoqualmie Indian Tribe. The total purchase encompasses approximately 45 acres of land in the Snoqualmie Tribe’s traditional territory. The purchase price was \$125 million.

The Muckleshoot Tribe acquired the Lodge in 2007 to build and diversify the tribe’s economy. Since that acquisition the Muckleshoot Tribe has invested to preserve and enhance the property and maintain its status as one of the top-ranked resorts in the country.

The purchase includes the property north of and across State Route 202, as well as the Salish Lodge & Spa, and the Snoqualmie Falls Gift Shop. The Snoqualmie Tribe said it will continue to operate the Lodge with current management company Columbia Hospitality, Inc., and customers of the Lodge will experience the same high-quality experience they have come to expect. A planned development approved by the City of Snoqualmie last October will no longer advance, Snoqualmie Tribal officials said.

The agreement comes after discussions and negotiations between the two sovereign tribal governments and represents a unique situation in which the Muckleshoot Tribe has supported the restoration of sacred and culturally significant land to the Snoqualmie people.

Snoqualmie Falls and the surrounding area is the most important sacred site to the Snoqualmie Tribe and is central to the history, spiritual practice, and identity of the Snoqualmie people. Its preservation is of the highest importance to the Snoqualmie Tribe.

“This purchase represents the Snoqualmie Tribe’s ongoing work to reclaim its traditional lands and will allow the Snoqualmie people to appropriately care for our sacred Falls and share it with all who wish to experience the powerful connection,” said Snoqualmie Tribal Chairman, Robert de los Angeles. “We are incredibly grateful to the Muckleshoot Tribe for their willingness to partner in our goal of protecting and preserving this sacred area.”

Muckleshoot Tribal Chairman, Jaison Elkins added: “It is a great feeling when Tribes can come together to further enhance both of their organizations. Salish Lodge is a premier resort in the Pacific Northwest. Knowing that its ownership will remain local with our neighbor Tribe is a positive for the region and all Indian Country. This sale is a prime example of Indian Self Determination and how Tribal nations can conduct business in a culturally sensitive way. The Muckleshoot Tribe plans to focus on new facilities and services for our tribal members and customers.”

The transaction was finalized on Thursday, October 31st, with the Snoqualmie Tribe becoming the legal owner of Salish Lodge and the surrounding land. The Snoqualmie Tribe is celebrating this historic achievement in conjunction with its 20th anniversary of federal re-recognition which occurred on October 6th, 1999 after decades of petitioning.

Due to the Snoqualmie Tribe’s success in its first 20 years since being re-recognized, it has been able to diversify economically in a way that upholds Tribal values; secures for all time its most sacred and beloved site; and returns the Falls to the ownership and stewardship of the Snoqualmie people.

Columbia Hospitality will continue to operate the Lodge, providing the same great level of service guests have come to expect and appreciate. “Salish Lodge is one of the most iconic and beloved destinations the Northwest, and we are honored to continue building on its legacy with the Snoqualmie Indian Tribe,” said John Oppenheimer, CEO and founder of Columbia Hospitality, Inc., which has managed Salish Lodge since 2007. “The thoughtful and impassioned service that our team members provide day-in and day-out will continue to be a pillar of the Salish experience, and we look forward to partnering with the Snoqualmie Tribe to find even more ways to connect our guests to the surrounding area and heritage.”

“Snoqualmie Falls is a sacred place and a globally beloved landmark, and the Salish Lodge is an iconic Northwest institution”, said Chairman de los Angeles. “We look forward to enriching the experience for Lodge guests by sharing the Tribe’s story, meaning, and history of the Falls and the Snoqualmie people who have cared for it since time immemorial.”

The Snoqualmie Indian Tribe is a federally recognized tribe in the Puget Sound region of Washington State. Known as the People of the Moon, Snoqualmie were signatories to the Treaty of Point Elliott in 1855. The Tribal Government headquarters are located in East King County. For more information visit www.snoqualmietribe.us.

The Muckleshoot Indian Tribe is a federally recognized Indian tribe whose membership is composed of descendants of the Duwamish and Upper Puyallup people who inhabited Central Puget Sound for thousands of years before non-Indian settlement. For more information visit www.muckleshoot.nsn.us