

Creek Nation, River Spirit Casino Approved To Continue Margaritaville Expansion

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TULSA, Oklahoma - The Muskogee (Creek) Nation and River Spirit Casino announced Wednesday they have obtained the required permit with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to continue its planned development of a 27-story hotel and Margaritaville Casino on the banks of the Arkansas River.

Margaritaville will be the first and only high-rise hotel along the banks of the Arkansas River, according to a news release.

They said by completing due diligence with the Corps, EPA, U.S. Fish and Wildlife, the Oklahoma Department of Wildlife Conservation and the City of Tulsa, every potential impact has been addressed.

"This has been a long process, but the Creek Nation is committed to ensuring our significant investment in our destination resort does not have an adverse impact on the environment," said CEO of Muskogee (Creek) Nation Casinos, Pat Crofts.

The Corps requires a 404 permit for any work and evaluates applications for public interest, as well as environmental criteria, the release says. Officials of the tribe worked closely with the Corps to share its construction plan that would foreseeable benefit or impact the Arkansas River.

"We didn't foresee that anyone was going to oppose the construction of the resort, but had some possible concerns with mitigation. All that is in the past, and now we can begin construction," said Muskogee (Creek) Nation Principal Chief, George Tiger.

According to the release, the construction phase is estimated to be completed in 2016.

It says the next steps include large-scale earth work needed to complete required riverbank stabilization and to construct the project pad site along and into the Arkansas River west of the existing casino.