

Construction of Wind Creek Casino Resort Progresses toward January 2009 Opening

Name of Casino: Wind Creek Casino Resort

Tribe: The Poarch Band of Creek Indians

City, State: Atmore, Alabama

Date of Completion: Early 2009

Excitement will sweep the Gulf Coast when construction of the 355,000 SF Wind Creek Casino Resort completes in January. Located in Atmore, Alabama, 60 miles from the Gulf of Mexico, the 16-story resort will be the most prominent visual tower in the area and will create a unique getaway destination with quality Class II gaming and multiple amenity options. The resort will be easily accessible from Interstate 65, and is an easy drive from several major southern cities, including Atlanta, Birmingham, Memphis, Mobile and Pensacola.

The Poarch Band of Creek Indians and Creek Indian Enterprises, the property's owner and developer, respectively, worked in collaboration with nationally-recognized casino resort designers and planners, Hnedak Bobo Group (HBG). HBG has a strong history working with an extensive number of Native American Tribes coast-to-coast, bringing a comprehensive understanding of the issues Tribes typically face when embarking on a long-term development and building plan. Alabama-based Brown Chambless Architects and Goodwyn Mill & Cawood, Inc. Architects are joint Architects-of-Record for the project.

Designing a destination resort facility with significant drawing power to attract visitors off the interstate was one of the most challenging aspects of the project. The tall, sleek, yet compact hotel tower is an eye-catching visual element. Rising from the rolling rural landscape, the 237-room resort tower is envisioned as a beacon that not only entices customers, but elevates guest expectations. "Once complete and open for business, the resort will attract not only casino patrons, but also those wanting to get away for a quiet weekend in a distinctive resort environment," states Rob Lee, AIA, Partner-in-

Charge for HBG, “the property delivers on the promise of a true destination entertainment experience, and is an excellent reflection of the Tribe’s forward-thinking approach for the resort.”

The design aesthetic of the resort will reflect its natural surroundings, combining contemporary and rustic elements into a fluid and flowing design, reflective of wind and water elements which have cultural significance to the Tribe. “The design solution weaves elements of nature with tribal reference and inspiration to create a contemporary, future-forward expression of tribal culture,” says Mark Weaver, AIA, the project’s lead designer. The exterior of the property employs a variety of materials including stone, glass and zinc coated titanium tile, a building material that is fairly new to the marketplace.

Creating expressive resort amenities on a greenfield site was another significant design opportunity. “It was important to communicate the Tribe’s connection to water through multiple aspects of the design solution, adds Weaver. “From the beginning, we made plans to organize the resort amenities around a central water feature – an oasis.” That feature evolved into a multi-level lake and pool with upper and lower waterfalls that affect the senses through sound and sight. All amenities were designed to overlook the three-acre lake, providing guests with tranquil vistas and outdoor venues such as a 2000-seat outdoor amphitheater. Inside, the contrasting excitement of the 1600-machine casino will offer a Las Vegas-style gaming experience which includes a VIP area, entertainment lounge, café, steakhouse and buffet.