

## Office of Public Affairs Tulalip Tribes



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### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

#### **Tulalip Tribes and Quil Ceda Village Defend Right to Tax Tribal Economic Development**

**Tulalip, WA**--June 12, 2015--The Tulalip Tribes and its political subdivision, the Consolidated Borough of Quil Ceda Village, filed suit today in the U.S. District Court for the Western District of Washington asking the Court to permanently enjoin the State of Washington and Snohomish County from imposing and enforcing sales and use, business and occupation, and personal property tax on economic activities within the boundaries of the Quil Ceda Village, to the extent of similar taxes imposed by Tulalip.

"With its own resources, the Tulalip Tribes transformed over 2,000 acres of vacant land into Quil Ceda Village, one of the premier shopping and entertainment destinations in Western Washington," said Mel Sheldon, chairman of the Tulalip Tribes. "Today, Quil Ceda Village has over 150 businesses, creating more than 6,000 jobs, attracting up to 60,000 visitors a day, and contributing hundreds of millions of dollars to the North Snohomish County economy."

Information from the Washington Department of Revenue reveals that Quil Ceda Village generates approximately \$40 million in tax revenues each year, but none of these taxes go to Tulalip or the Village. Instead, the state and county collect one hundred percent of the taxes, with the vast majority going to Olympia. "This is a grave injustice," continued Sheldon. "Like any government, Tulalip must generate tax revenues to fund the infrastructure and local government services it provides, which benefit not just Village businesses and patrons, but everyone in Snohomish County."

"As a matter of federal law," said Sheldon "Tulalip is entitled to collect its own Tribal taxes on business activities in Quil Ceda Village and Tulalip will defend its right to function as a sovereign government." Tulalip cannot do this as long as the state and county continue to impose and enforce their taxes because businesses and customers in the Village would be subject to dual taxation. The United States has long recognized that tribal taxing authority is an important aspect of tribal sovereignty and self-governance.

For well over a decade the Tulalip Tribes has requested to work together with both state and county officials to reach a fair resolution on this issue, but these requests have been ignored. "It is critical for the continued growth of the Village that we take action now," said Chairman Sheldon.

**About the Tulalip Tribes and the Consolidated Borough of Quil Ceda Village**

The Tulalip Tribes is a federally-recognized Indian tribal government, and the Consolidated Borough of Quil Ceda Village is a political subdivision of the Tulalip Tribes, located entirely on federal land held in trust by the United States for the benefit of the Tulalip Tribes. Quil Ceda Village is located on the Tulalip Indian Reservation and consists of approximately 2100 acres. It is adjacent to the western boundary of Interstate 5 and is approximately 40 minutes north of Seattle, Washington.

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