KIRKLAND, WASHINGTON — Privately held Maverick Gaming established a substantial presence in rural Nevada starting in 2018, acquiring four hotel-casinos – two each in West Wendover and Elko – and a non-gaming hotel in Elko.

Combined, Maverick's Nevada casinos encompass more than 1,200 hotel rooms, nearly 1,700 slot machines and 43 table games. Maverick also owns three casinos in Colorado.

However, Maverick CEO Eric Persson said the company's future is centered in the Pacific Northwest.

Maverick owns and operates 19 of Washington's 44 licensed cardrooms, which he said account for roughly 50 percent of the company's overall revenues. The cardrooms are limited to 15 table games – baccarat, poker and variations of blackjack.

But Persson has even loftier goals.

Maverick failed in 2020 and 2021 to get the Washington Legislature to include cardrooms in legislation that allowed the state's tribal casinos to offer sports betting. In January, the company filed a federal lawsuit

claiming the state unlawfully granted Native American casinos a "discriminatory tribal gaming monopoly."

So far, 20 of Washington's 29 tribes with gaming operations have amended their compacts to add retail sports betting. Only nine of the tribes, however, have launched retail sportsbooks at 12 casinos. Mobile sports wagering is allowed, but only within the physical confines of the casino.

BetMGM, Caesars Sportsbook, FanDuel and DraftKings have branded sports betting facilities in connection with Washington tribes, while International Game Technology supplies the sports betting hardware for five locations.

Persson said expanded sports betting would allow Maverick to convert small portions of the cardrooms into retail sportsbooks and allow each location to hire up to 10 additional employees. Maverick has roughly 2,000 employees in Washington.

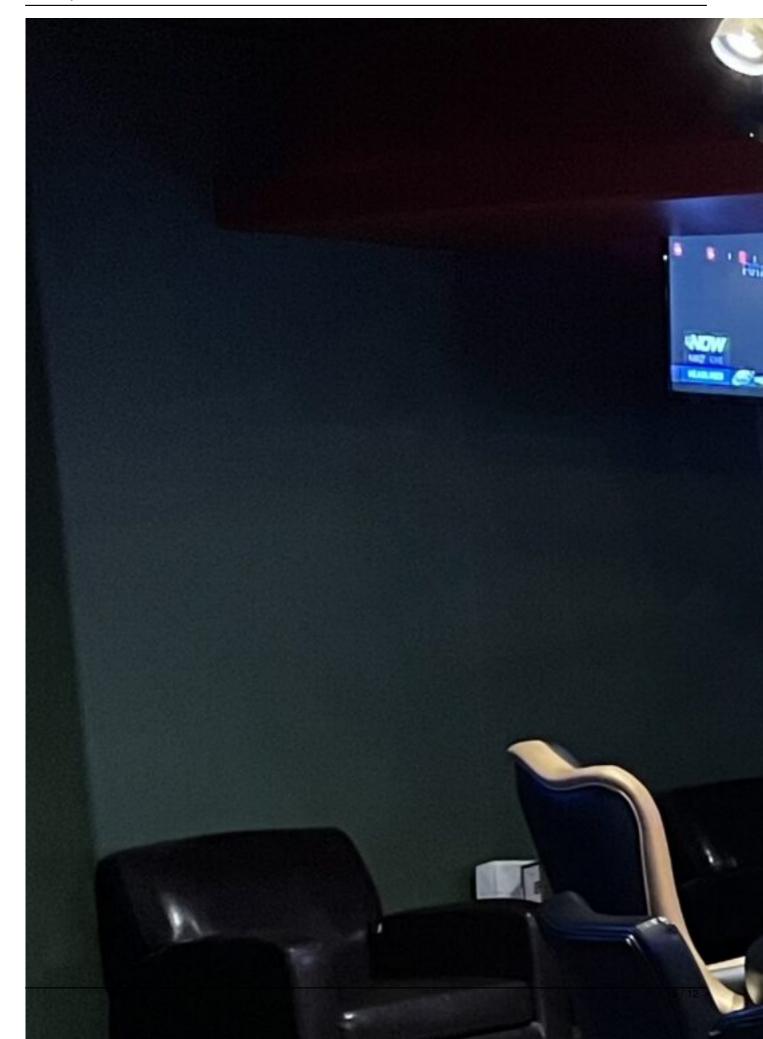
He added that Maverick would again seek a legislative change to allow sports betting at the company's small facilities when state lawmakers gather next year. The legal fight, he said, would also continue.

The lawsuit was originally filed in Washington, D.C., but has since been transferred to the federal District Court in the state of Washington.

"We think the law passed by the state of Washington is ultimately being misapplied," Persson said in an interview. "We think this will eventually wind its way to the Supreme Court. We're extremely confident that when it does, we're going to be on the winning side."



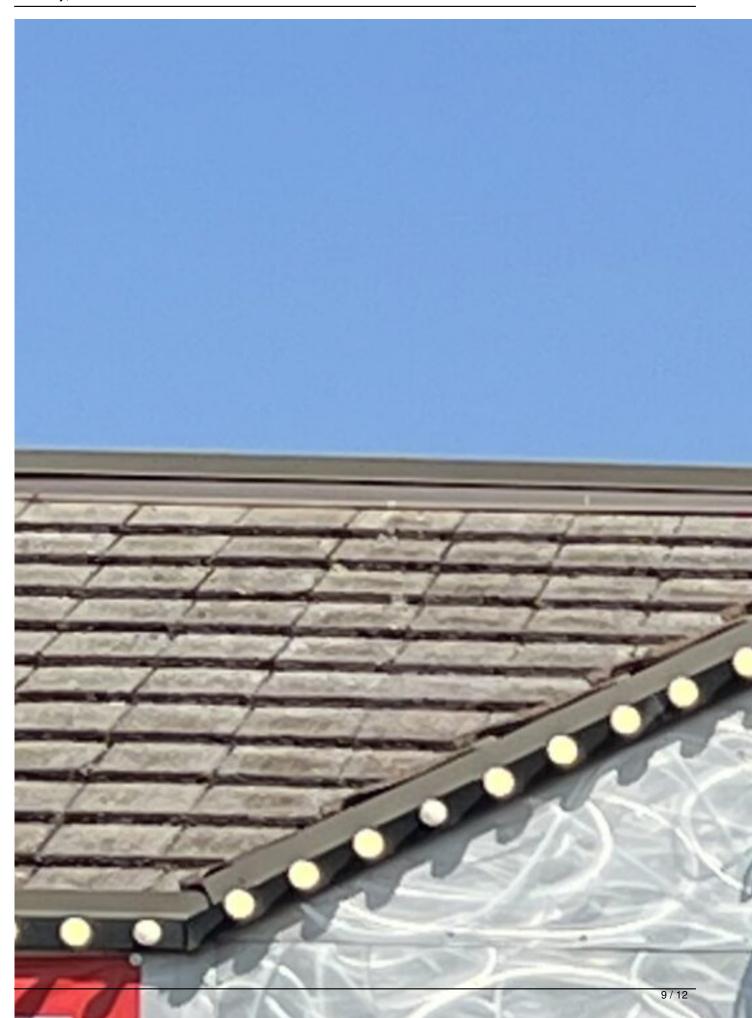




Written by Administrator Monday, 10 October 2022 04:00 -

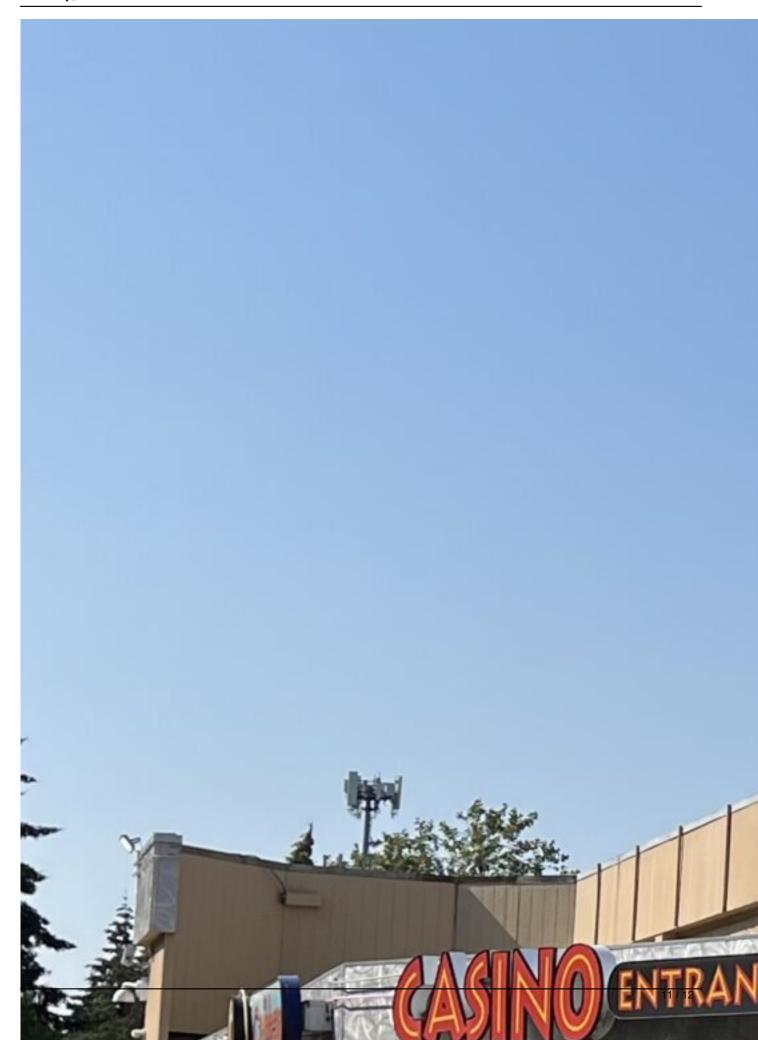
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