Fuel-Price Exposure in Tribal Travel-Center Feasibility

Organizational author: Wert-Berater Financial. A dated public-data research brief; no named professional reviewer or legal sign-off is asserted.

National retail prices are useful context, but they do not establish the delivered cost, tax treatment, fuel margin or viability of a particular Tribal enterprise. This brief connects a dated public-data snapshot to the questions a defensible project model must answer.

Research question and evidence boundaries

How should an analyst use a national fuel-price movement when evaluating a proposed travel center? The answer begins by separating observable national retail prices from project-specific wholesale terms, gallons, taxes, retail competition and cash requirements.

The source is EIA's Gasoline and Diesel Fuel Update, released November 17, 2026. We transcribed the displayed national regular-gasoline and on-highway-diesel observations for November 2, 9 and 16 into a six-value dataset. Both series are U.S. dollars per gallon and include all taxes. They are not Nevada observations, Tribal-enterprise prices, supplier quotes or evidence of a particular tax position.

The documented observations

The downloadable CSV contains the same six source values, date labels and source URL shown here. The snapshot is intentionally fixed and dated; future releases must not silently replace the evidence behind this brief.

Week of	Regular gasoline	On-highway diesel
2026-11-02	$4.153	$6.292
2026-11-09	$3.995	$6.127
2026-11-16	$3.805	$5.937

U.S. dollars per gallon; retail prices include all taxes. Not Tribal, Nevada, wholesale or station-margin observations.

EIA source page and methods: https://www.eia.gov/petroleum/gasdiesel/

Download the benchmark CSV: https://www.wert-berater.com/media/tribal-fuel-benchmarks-2026-11.csv

Original week-to-week calculations

From November 9 to November 16, national regular gasoline changed by $-0.190 per gallon (-4.76%), and on-highway diesel changed by $-0.190 per gallon (-3.10%). These are calculations from the published observations, not a forecast.

Absolute change equals the latest observation minus the preceding observation. Percentage change equals that difference divided by the preceding observation, multiplied by 100. Dollar changes are rounded to three decimals and percentage changes to two; calculations use the unrounded numeric inputs.

Three weekly observations cannot establish a long-term trend, expected volatility, a seasonal model or a representative distribution of Tribal fuel economics. The source's population and sampling methods differ from a site-specific traffic and operating study.

Why the retail-price change is not a margin forecast

A station's realized gross fuel economics depend on retail receipts and delivered fuel costs, including the contractually relevant base price, freight, fees, discounts, card charges, inventory effects and reviewed taxes. A fall in a national retail average does not show whether the station's supply cost fell sooner, later, more or less.

The sales mix also matters. Gasoline and diesel customers, fleet contracts, branded arrangements and payment methods can have different margins and working-capital requirements. A single national price change must not be multiplied by assumed project gallons and labeled an increase or loss in profit.

Build a reconciliation from each material source and assumption to the volume-weighted net fuel margin used in the model. Document the price basis and whether a tax, freight or payment charge is already included so it is not counted twice.

Supplier terms to request before adopting a base case

Request the actual or proposed supply agreement, pricing formula, delivered-cost basis, freight responsibility, minimum volume, brand and equipment obligations, exclusivity, rebates, payment terms and termination conditions. Identify uncommitted terms rather than fill them with another operator's arrangements.

The counterparty, purchasing entity, inventory ownership and timing of cash payments can affect working capital and risk. Counsel and qualified tax professionals must review the relevant legal and tax assumptions; the analyst models documented conclusions rather than assert a universal Tribal exemption.

An explicitly illustrative margin sensitivity

The following is arithmetic on a hypothetical annual volume of 1,000,000 gallons, not a client forecast, the Nevada model or an EIA estimate. Assume only the stated net margin changes while volume and other costs stay fixed. An annual one-cent-per-gallon margin change equals $10,000 of gross contribution before any consequential cost or working-capital changes.

Hypothetical +/-$0.01/gallon x 1,000,000 gallons = +/-$10,000 annual gross contribution, before consequential costs.

Hypothetical +/-$0.03/gallon x 1,000,000 gallons = +/-$30,000 annual gross contribution, before consequential costs.

Hypothetical +/-$0.05/gallon x 1,000,000 gallons = +/-$50,000 annual gross contribution, before consequential costs.

Reconcile the sensitivity to actual cash available for debt service

Gross contribution is not net income, free cash flow or DSCR. Reconcile labor, utilities, maintenance, insurance, management fees, replacement capital, taxes, reserves, working capital and distributions under the commissioned model's cash-flow definition.

Show component-level fuel/convenience and any restaurant, parking, charging or leasing schedules before consolidating. Test slower ramp-up, lower gallons, merchandise mix, staffing cost, supply terms, construction timing and financing changes. Missing debt terms are an unresolved input, not a zero denominator or infinite debt coverage.

EV charging requires its own electricity, demand-charge, utilization, dwell-time, maintenance and capital assumptions. Adding chargers does not automatically make observed truck or gasoline demand available to a charging operation.

What the authorized Nevada assignment demonstrates

The public Nevada case discloses a completed Tribal travel-center assignment with $3,969,648 evaluated project value, a Section 17 context, fuel/convenience, quick-service restaurant and retail components, a 170-slide report and a 57-tab integrated model.

Its relevance is the need for component-level financing, source reconciliation and project-specific reviewed tax assumptions. This brief does not reproduce its workbook, formulas, supplier agreement, confidential identity or financial projections, and does not extrapolate its results to other Tribal enterprises.

Read the published case:
https://www.wert-berater.com/newsroom/wert-berater-inc-completes-tribal-travel-center-feasibility-study-in-us-50-corridor-nevada.html

Limitations, reproducibility and practical use

This brief uses six public national benchmark observations and three stated hypothetical margin assumptions. It does not estimate site capture, wholesale cost, a tax benefit, Tribal market demand, a financing amount or a project return. It is not legal, tax, engineering or investment advice.

The preparation script validates the dated source structure, saves its SHA-256 evidence fingerprint and produces the downloadable CSV. The calculations are stated above and can be reproduced without a proprietary model. Current program eligibility, procurement, ownership and legal questions still require the relevant professional and agency review.

The appropriate next step is to review existing authorized planning and financial work, identify what remains usable, and define only the additional market, supplier, model or specialist evidence needed for the actual decision.

Research downloads and source

Prepared November 18, 2026. Organizational author: Wert-Berater Financial. No named professional reviewer or legal sign-off is asserted. This is a dated research snapshot, not a live price feed.

Download the complete research PDF: https://www.wert-berater.com/media/tribal-fuel-economics-research-brief-2026-11.pdf

Download the benchmark CSV: https://www.wert-berater.com/media/tribal-fuel-benchmarks-2026-11.csv

Review the official EIA source: https://www.eia.gov/petroleum/gasdiesel/

Browse the research series: https://www.wert-berater.com/research/tribal-economic-development/

Source evidence and reproducibility

EIA release: November 17, 2026. Source checked: November 18, 2026. Original calculations and the CSV use only the six displayed observations. The source snapshot SHA-256 is b54d8510becf1695d6bf62cf48be2470e28c7a982e6c4a84541d32cad206e0e1.