Native American Descendant's Property Grabbed by Government

Business property owned for 23 years seized after County of San Bernardino bureaucrats manipulate conditional use permit;

Andy Acosta, AJ Acosta Company, Inc., Big Bear Lake, CA

BIG BEAR LAKE, CA, USA, February 6, 2014 /EINPresswire.com/ -- 10 working-class minority families lose livelihood

[UPDATE: Court hearing today = devastating outcome. See blog link in body copy for updates.]

Embattled business owner, Joaquín Andrés (Andy) Acosta, owner of A.J. Acosta Company Inc., is being forced to lay off 10 longtime, immigrant employees in the small mountain community of Big Bear Lake, CA, as a result of the County of San Bernardino's order approving the seizure of heavy equipment, trucks and tools from business property owned over 23 years, while neighboring properties are left alone running similar businesses. Acosta, who is 12% Native American, said, "I can really relate more to what my ancestors went through. I've had this property for 23 years. County bureaucrats singled me out, changing zoning usage after I bought the land. I just turned 50 and I'm seeing my legacy taken away. It feels like I don't live in a free country if a guy who works in a government office can change the rules on a whim and wipe out the business I built that feeds my family, my workers and their families. I don't know how to fight this anymore. I'm out of money, and I'm out of time."

Andy Acosta is not a criminal; he's an ordinary small business owner, life-long resident of Big Bear Lake and a family man who has owned this property since 1989. Yet, the tools and equipment he needs to continue employing workers and to serve his community were seized recently by the San Bernardino County government to be auctioned off this March. And the land he bought that was zoned properly for the type of business he has been running is supposed to be returned to its natural state.

Acosta's next door competitor has a son who just happens to be the local Fire Chief, who receives a paycheck from the County of San Bernardino. Additionally, one of the business owners of the same neighboring property works at the Community Services District, a branch of the County funded by taxpayers. As far as Acosta knows, his neighbors are not receiving equal treatment.

"Somehow the County came up with the idea that the property on either side of me could remain 'as is' but mine would have to be returned to its natural state," said Acosta. "Did they play Eeny, meeny, miny, moe that day or was it just a case of 'let's kick out the brown guys?' It never made sense. It seems personal."

Acosta was a young family man with twin boys and a successful construction company when he purchased his North Shore Drive property 23 years ago with the encouragement of County officials. Then, after three years in business on the property, San Bernardino County changed policies and

bureaucratic officials insisted that to stay in business, Acosta had to file for a Conditional Use Permit paying several thousand dollars. That fee quickly escalated when the County bureaucracy decided it was only a deposit for additional to-be-determined fees. Eventually, the County bureaucrats decided the permit fees would be close to $100,000. This is years after Acosta bought the property.
Acosta decided to fight the County bureaucrats' runaway money and power grab. That began years of conflicting requirements between different government agencies and utilities, revoked permits, escalating fines and expensive litigation.

Acosta is pro-business and civic minded. He has donated many free cords of wood to community fundraisers and civic groups over the years and actively participated in the safety and welfare of Big Bear Lake and Big Bear City. Over the past two decades, Acosta and his crew have fought area wildfires and cleared avalanches when the existing government workers were overwhelmed.

Despite being besieged by a vindictive County bureaucracy for over a decade, Acosta has managed to stay in business for over twenty years, surviving this terrible economic downturn.

Nonetheless, the County of San Bernardino is now insisting that Acosta vacate his North Shore Drive property and "rehabilitate" that property to its natural state, a court order that is impossible to comply with and still remain in business.

The County of San Bernardino's court order and the County of San Bernardino's government's selective actions contribute to an increasingly negative business climate in the State of California. The County of San Bernardino's demand that Acosta remove any trace of his construction business and restore the property to its original vacant lot condition is a strike at the heart of small business, working-class families, minority rights, and American industry. The cost of compliance has been quoted between $9 million to $30 million dollars, an amount far above the value of the property. And that does not include the loss of Acosta's life-long business.

The San Bernardino County bureaucracy using the State of California's judicial system is railroading Acosta. This is costing California taxpayers millions in wasteful government spending and is also a tragic community loss to the residents and visitors of Big Bear Lake.

A. J. Acosta Company Inc. are seasoned timber and heavy equipment experts with more than 30 years of timber and forestry management experience in the residential, commercial, and government sectors. For updates on this story, follow the blog:
http://ajacostacompany.blogspot.com/p/help-acosta-fight-for-his-property.html

Big Bear Lake, #govt #nativeamerican #teaparty #landgrabs #landrights #dems #minority #county San Bernardino County, AJ Acosta, #chicano #latino #hispanic #small business #governmentproperty grab #GOP #conservative #badgovernment #immigration

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Andy Acosta
A.J. Acosta Company Inc
909-744-4500
email us here

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