



Opinions and Letters

Chumash land action puzzling

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Travis Armstrong makes an excellent point when he says he doesn't get it. The Chumash are gaining back a tiny slice of their land and people are up in arms about it. He's right. I don't get it, either.

If the Chumash tribe is truly desiring self-sufficiency and self-determination, why would it take tens of millions of dollars' worth of real estate that it owns in this valley as private property owners and hand it right back to the federal government?

The cultural center, museum and office space the tribe claims it wants to build could have been completed by now under current zoning. The only thing it couldn't do with privately owned property is gaming. Why not keep the property as an asset for the entire tribe?

Owning the land as private property owners benefits the tribe because the land can be built on, sold, etc. It is actually a very sound and smart investment. Once the land is taken into trust status, however, the tribe does not "own" the property, the federal government does.

Trust status means they cannot even sell the land if they choose to do so. Why would you want to do that to the tribe? You're right. I don't get it.

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