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U.S. DISTRICT COURT GRANTS MOTION TO DISMISS IN LAWSUIT AGAINST SANTA YNEZ BAND OF CHUMASH INDIANS

SANTA YNEZ, CA – July 3, 2015 -- The Santa Ynez Band of Chumash Indians learned yesterday that the U.S. District Court granted a “Motion to Dismiss” in the case of “Save the Valley, LLC v. The Santa Ynez Band of Chumash Indians et al.”

“This was yet another frivolous lawsuit brought on by the local tribal opponents,” said Vincent Armenta, Tribal Chairman of the Santa Ynez Band of Chumash Indians. “Unfortunately, a small group of anti-tribal folks in the community have made it their mission in life to oppose our tribe on everything we do.”

The Honorable R. Gary Klausner, U.S. District judge, granted the Tribe’s motion to dismiss for lack of jurisdiction and failure to join a necessary and indispensable party.

“The Save the Valley lawsuit was based on an intentional misreading of the 1935 deed to the U.S. Government, which specifically says the property that

the Tribe occupies is deeded for the purpose of an ‘Indian Reservation,’” said Chairman Armenta. “Tribal opponents have continually claimed that the Santa Ynez Band of Chumash Indians is not a Tribe and the Santa Ynez Reservation is not a Reservation. However, significant historical documentation exists to prove otherwise.”

The lawsuit, which was filed on April 3, 2015 against Chairman Armenta and members of the tribe’s elected government officials, sought declaratory judgment and permanent injunction regarding the tribe’s expansion of its Chumash Casino Resort.

Chairman Armenta said this was not the first time local tribal opponents have sued the Tribe, nor will it be the last. “Save the Valley tried to sue me and our legal representative Sam Cohen in July 2014,” he said. “The case was dismissed in November 2014. The tribe prevailed then, we prevailed now and we will continue to prevail because truth is on our side.”

The Santa Ynez Band of Chumash Indians is located in Santa Barbara County, California. The tribe owns and operates the popular Chumash Casino Resort on its reservation and also owns two hotels and a restaurant in the nearby town of Solvang – Hotel Corque, Hadsten House and Root 246 – as well as two gas stations in Santa Ynez.

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