

Bay Area couple sues TRPA over Angora burn property

By Howard Mintz, San Jose Mercury News

Backed by a conservative legal group, a San Jose couple has taken their six-year feud with Lake Tahoe regional planners to federal court, arguing that a policy keeping them from building a house for their elderly mothers on vacant property is unconstitutional.

In a lawsuit filed Thursday in U.S. District Court in Sacramento, Ray and Teresa Burns allege that the government is violating protections against improper taking of property by denying them permits to build the South Lake Tahoe home.

The couple purchased the property in foreclosure in 2009, two years after a house on that land burned down in the 2007 Angora forest fire. The lawsuit, crafted by the Sacramento-based Pacific Legal Foundation, notes that a house had been on that same property for 30 years prior to the fire, and that the property is surrounded by other homes and businesses.

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