Written by Administrator
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PHOENIX (AP) - A southern Arizona tribe planning to build a casino resort in suburban Glendale already used up a federal allotment being invoked to acquire the site, according to a new court filing by a tribe that already operates casinos in the Phoenix area.

The Gila River Indian Community has sued to

   block the Tohono O'odham Nation's project, contending in its original lawsuit that the U.S. Interior Department acted illegally and skirted its own policies when it agreed to take land into trust on behalf of the nation.

In a court filing Tuesday, Gila River asked a judge to accept an updated lawsuit.

It contends that newly discovered evidence indicates that previous Tohono O'odham land purchases totaling 16,000 acres exceeded a 9,880-acre cap set under federal law, before the 2003 purchase of a 135-acre parcel that includes the proposed 54-acre casino site.
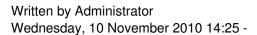
Tohono O'odham representatives did not immediately respond to requests for comment.

A 1986 federal law allowed the Tohono O'odham tribe to add 9,880 acres of land to its reservation to replace land that was flooded when a dam was built. The law requires that the new land be outside the "corporate limits" of a city.

The site is unincorporated land surrounded on three sides by Glendale.

Glendale officials have filed their own suit to block the project, saying they don't want a sovereign Indian nation in their community and that a new reservation would bring competition to nearby businesses.

The tribe has said the project would deliver tourists to the region while helping both Glendale and the tribe.

U.S. District Judge David Campbell has a Feb. 17 hearing on the case.

Gila River's tribal headquarters is in Sacaton. The Tohono O'odham tribal offices are in Sells.

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