How a $30-Million Federal Lawsuit Was Blown Up Over Breakfast

Six years of litigation fizzled out in July when one of the plaintiffs dropped a bombshell at a breakfast meeting with opposing counsel, effectively ending a $30 million federal lawsuit filed against a Saudi businessman over a California wildfire.

The *Los Angeles Times* tells **the story** of the now-dismissed case over the fire than burned more thann 25,000 acres. The government originally contended that an electrical junction box on Tarek Al-Shawaf's property had malfunctioned, sparked and started the Mountain fire.

Recently, one of the private plaintiffs mentioned to Al-Shawaf's lawyer that his own investigation turned up the fact that the fire probably started hundreds of feet from the Saudi's property, writes the *Times*' **Joseph Serna**.

"To be honest, at the time I didn't realize it was this crucial," plaintiff Lawrence Goda said in hindsight. "I figured the feds … would have definitely factored that into the case."

Read the *Lost Angeles Times* article.