

Arizona Game and Fish sued over death of jaguar Macho B

By Tim Steller

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The Center for Biological Diversity is accusing Arizona Game and Fish of illegally capturing and collaring Macho B, the last known wild jaguar in the United States, in a lawsuit filed today.

The suit focuses on the permits that Arizona Game and Fish cites as authorizing their capture of the jaguar on Feb. 18, and their subsequent recapture and euthanization of Macho B on March 2. The center argues that the permits that Game and Fish cites do not authorize any "take" of jaguars — incidental or intentional — which are an endangered species.

Macho B was captured Feb. 18 and fitted with a radio collar during a study of mountain lion and black bear movements in the mountains near the U.S.-Mexico border between Arivaca and Nogales. Since the jaguar was re-captured and euthanized March 2, allegations have emerged that the capture was not unintentional.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has been conducting a criminal investigation of the events surrounding Macho B's capture and death since April.

However, the lawsuit makes no argument about whether the capture was intentional. It simply asks a federal judge to declare that Arizona Game and Fish does not have a valid permit to take — meaning capture or otherwise interfere with — jaguars and to issue an injunction from further interference with the species.

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