

They didn't pick Randy's choicest quotes but he still nailed it...

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The Bird Is Back

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Two years ago, the pygmy owl was taken off the endangered species list and most everyone thought that was the end of it. 11 years of bitter disputes over a tiny bird had come to an end.

But now, it's back.

Three organizations have made their intentions known. They intend to file suit against the US Government to get the owl back on the endangered species list.

The Center for Biological Diversity, Defenders of Wildlife and Public Employees for Environmental Responsibility have filed an official notice of intent to sue the US Fish and Wildlife Service to get the owl relisted.

"All the available science points to this as a distinct population segment. It's very important for the recovery and survival of the pygmy owl. The birds in Arizona are crucial and they need protected," says Randy Serraglio, of the Center for Biological Diversity.

Even the Fish and Wildlife Department agrees up to a point.

"We anticipate completing the analysis of the centers petition within 60 days. At that point, Fish and Wildlife will know whether the service will review the owl's eligibility for endangered species protection," says Jeff Humphrey, from Fish and Wildlife.

The owl was placed on the endangered species list in 1997. At that time, about 750,000 acres in Southern Arizona was designated critical habitat for the owl. That meant no development in those regions. Much of the land was on the Northwest side of Tucson.

Developers opposed the designation, led by the Southern Arizona Homebuilders Association, or SAHBA.

On hearing the news, SAHBA officials say they will not immediately oppose the relisting, until they see any new science or data which has been compiled in the past two years.

Fish and Wildlife says if it decides to reconsider, it will take a year or more to decide.