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Group seeks federal protection for rare amphibians

ALBUQUERQUE, N.M. (AP) -- An environmental group is going to court in an effort to protect several rare amphibians and reptiles found in New Mexico, Texas and Arizona.

The Center for Biological Diversity has filed a formal notice of its intent to sue the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in an attempt to add the scaly and slimy creatures to the federal threatened and endangered species list.

The species include the Rio Grande cooter, Arizona toad, Arizona night lizard, Bezy's night lizard, the reticulate collared lizard, the Yuman Desert fringe-toed lizard and the Cascade Caverns salamander.

The Center for Biological Diversity contends the species are in danger because their habitat is being threatened.

Biologist and lawyer Collette Adkins Giese says the creatures, although rarely seen, are part of what make the Southwest unique.