

## Trapper pleads guilty to capturing jaguar

by John Faherty - May. 15, 2010 12:00 AM  
The Arizona Republic

The man who captured a jaguar in southern Arizona pleaded guilty in U.S. District Court on Friday to the prohibited take of an endangered species.

Emil McCain was sentenced to five years of probation and is prohibited from working with or trapping any large cats in the United States during that time.

The jaguar, known as Macho B, was caught Feb. 18, 2009, in a snare in a remote section of the Coronado National Forest west of Nogales.

He was the last known wild jaguar in the U.S., though the animal is notoriously elusive and there may be others. At the time, the state Game and Fish Department said the capture was inadvertent.

The agency said it was trapping as part of a years-long study of other large mammals in the area.

Once a jaguar was captured, though, Game and Fish decided to learn more about the elusive animal, and Macho B was sedated, fitted with a satellite-radio transmitter, and released.

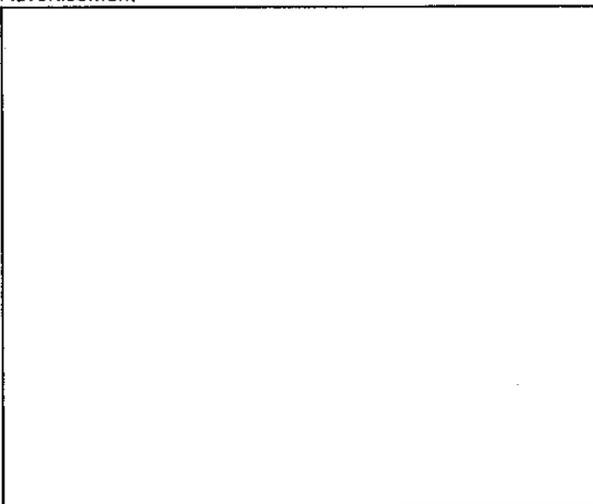
After just a few days, however, the radio signals from the collar indicated Macho B was not moving as he should. He was captured again and flown by helicopter to the Phoenix Zoo. Veterinarians there decided the cat was suffering acute kidney failure, and euthanized him.

In court Friday, McCain admitted placing jaguar scat at three snare sites in an attempt to catch the jaguar. At the time, he was working under contract for the agency, setting snares for mountain lions and bears. McCain had knowledge that Macho B had recently been photographed in the area of the snares.

His motive was not made clear. He said he did this without authorization from Arizona Game and Fish.

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