

# Activists Indicted by Feds in Arizona Hunt Sabotage

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2005

In December 2004, Earth First! activists Matthew Crozier and Rod Coronado, along with Esquire magazine journalist John Richardson, were charged with conspiracy to impede or injure a federal officer. The indictment followed a Tucson-based Chuk'shon Earth First! (CEF!) action that sabotaged a mountain lion hunt in Sabino Canyon that March.

Prosecutors charge that CEF! threatened, intimidated, and interfered with the US Department of Agriculture Wildlife Services lion hunters. CEF! organized a campaign that included nonviolent tactics such as the spreading of false lion urine scent to lead hunting hounds away from the real lions. The hunt was organized by the Arizona Game & Fish Department (AZGFD) and US Forest Service.

The indictment cites as evidence media interviews with Coronado who stated that CEF! members were ready to place their bodies between the hunters and the lions to protect them. Initially, they had been charged with violating a federal closure and disabling a steel-cable snare. Coronado believes the indictment is in response to his continued organizing against AZGFD's controversial policies such as the killing and removal of lions from the Coronado National Forest and the trophy hunting of sandhill cranes and desert bighorn sheep in southern Arizona.

In November, Coronado was part of a CEF! investigation team that exposed AZGFD's annual trophy hunt for sandhill cranes south of Willcox, Arizona. Coronado stated, "It's just an Orwellian attempt to intimidate me for criticizing and drawing attention to AZGFD policies that cater to urban sprawl and trophy hunters."

The campaigns against the AZGFD have created a storm of negative publicity for the department. Because CEF! has refused to stop organizing against the AZGFD hunts, these more serious charges have been brought against the activists in an attempt to shut them up. If convicted, the three defendants face up to 7 years in prison.

For more info or to send donations for legal support, please contact: sabthebastards — at — hotmail — dot — com or POB 1925, Tucson, AZ 85706.

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