

DEPARTMENT of the INTERIOR

news release

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

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ILLEGAL FUR TRAFFIC HALTED

A major New York City fur brokerage firm has pleaded guilty to a three-count information charging it with illegally trafficking in furs taken and exported in violation of the wildlife laws of Brazil, Lynn A. Greenwalt, Director of the Interior Department's U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, announced today.

In December 1971 and January 1972, the company, the Peter Andrea Corporation illegally placed in foreign commerce a total of 473 ocelot, 49 jaguar, 140 otter, 24 giant otter, and 228 margay skins from the Federative Republic of Brazil. These skins were being shipped to Europe via Canada. Brazil has a total ban on the exportation of these animals.

Records seized from the corporation indicated the skins then had a wholesale value of over \$39,000. The skins were mislabeled often as "seeds" or "leathers." The two-year investigation by Special Agents of the Fish and Wildlife Service grew out of other recent investigations into illegal fur traffic and was conducted with the assistance of wildlife and Customs agencies in Europe, South America, and Canada. It is part of the Service's stepped up campaign to halt the illicit commercialization of wildlife both at home and abroad.

The company was charged with violating the Lacey Act, Title 18 USC, which prohibits anyone subject to jurisdiction of the United States engaging in commerce of wildlife illegally taken or exported from a foreign country. The law carries a maximum fine for criminal violations of \$10,000

(over)

for each count. At this time, no date has been set for sentencing by the Federal judge. The information filed by the United States Attorney David G. Trager in United States District Court, Eastern District of New York, charges the corporation with knowingly and willfully receiving, acquiring, and purchasing the skins in violation of the laws of the Republic of Brazil.

In addition to the criminal plea, the Peter Andrea Corporation, together with one other corporation and three individuals, signed a consent injunction with worldwide effect. This permanent injunction provides that Peter Andrea Corporation, 132 Nassau Street, New York, New York; Peter Andrea Corporation Canada Ltd., 366 Mayor Street, Montreal PQ1, Canada; Irving Engel, 4705 Henry Hudson Parkway, New York, New York; Herbert Fabrikant, 600 West 246th Street, New York, New York; and Jeremiah Kline, 145 Shepherd Lane, Roslyn Heights, New York; will not deliver, carry, transport, ship, sell, receive, or purchase puma, margay, ocelot, otter, giant otter, jaguar, cheetah, leopard, or tiger skins taken, transported, or sold in any foreign country.

In addition, the injunction provides that each of the defendants will provide a list of all fur firms, present and future, with which they have, or may later have, any association anywhere in the world and that they will open their books and records and fur storehouses to inspection by United States Agents anytime and anywhere in the world.

The injunction also provides for standard recordkeeping and maintenance of export permits in the records.

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