



*Office of the United States Attorney
District of Arizona*

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Public Affairs
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JURY FINDS TUCSON MAN GUILTY OF KNOWINGLY LITTERING ON NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE

TUCSON, Ariz. - Walter Staton, 27, of Tucson, was found guilty of knowingly littering on a National Wildlife Refuge, by a federal jury in Tucson. The case was tried before United States Magistrate Judge Jennifer C. Guerin on June 1st and 2nd. Sentencing is set before Judge Guerin on August 11, 2009.

“The Buenos Aires National Wildlife Refuge was created by Congress for the protection of fish, wildlife and plant resources,” stated Diane J. Humetewa, U.S. Attorney for the District of Arizona. “The placing of plastic jugs on the Buenos Aires National Wildlife Refuge contributes to a serious garbage problem on the Refuge, which degrades the habitat of these natural resources. We are committed to protecting this Refuge for the benefit of present and future generations of Americans.”

The evidence at trial showed that the defendant was a member of an organization called No More Deaths, whose volunteers sometimes leave water jugs on the Buenos Aires National Wildlife Refuge in the hopes that illegal aliens crossing the border will use the water. On December 4, 2008, Staton left water jugs on the Refuge despite knowing that he could be ticketed for littering. Staton had previously been quoted in news articles stating that despite a prior conviction of another member of his group for the same violation, that he would continue to leave plastic water jugs in the Refuge.

A conviction for knowingly littering carries a maximum penalty of one year confinement, a \$100,000 fine or both. In determining an actual sentence, Judge Guerin will consult the U.S. Sentencing Guidelines, which provide appropriate sentencing ranges. The judge, however, is not bound by those guidelines in determining a sentence.

The investigation leading to the guilty verdict was conducted by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and U.S. Border Patrol. The prosecution was handled by Lawrence Lee, Assistant U.S. Attorney, District of Arizona, Tucson.

CASE NUMBER: 09-04580M-TUC-JCG
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