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Watchdog Group Calls for U.S. Inspector General Probe of Nation's Primate Centers After Reports Reveal Negligence Killed 40 Monkeys at 6 Labs

WASHINGTON, DC – In the wake of the announced closure of one of the nation's premier national primate laboratories – Harvard's New England National Primate Research Center – a national research watchdog has revealed that Harvard's fatal negligence which killed at least four primates is only the tip of the iceberg of similar problems in the national primate center system.

Six of the other seven national primate centers – which receive more than \$280 million annually – have been cited, fined, or are currently under investigation for killing animals in violation of the federal Animal Welfare Act, said SAEN (Stop Animal Exploitation Now), a nonprofit watchdog group.

SAEN is now calling for a U.S. Inspector General audit of the national primate center system, which has killed, through negligence, at least 40 primates just over the last few years.

- The California National Primate Research Center (Davis, Ca) was cited by the USDA for 19 primate deaths and a complaint has been filed relevant to another 12.
- The Oregon National Primate Research Center (Beaverton, Or) was fined for five primate deaths.
- The Washington National Primate Research Center (Seattle, Wa) was fined for a primate death in late 2011 and an additional complaint has been filed.
- The Southwest National Primate Research Center (San Antonio, Tx) was previously fined for one primate death and has since been cited for two subsequent primate deaths.
- The Wisconsin National Primate Research Center (Madison, Wi) is currently the subject of a 41 count USDA federal complaint relevant to multiple animals.
- The Yerkes National Primate Research Center (Atlanta) has been cited by the USDA for a primate fatality.

“SAEN has called for an immediate Inspector General audit of the Primate Center System to prevent further deaths and to begin the process of redirecting funding to scientific research which will benefit the U.S. public,” said Michael A. Budkie, A.H.T., Executive Director of SAEN. “These primate labs are clearly incapable of basic animal care, and therefore their funding should be drastically decreased.”

Internal photos, USDA inspection reports, enforcement documents, and internal records are available upon request from SAEN.