

# Smuggled tiger undergoes emergency surgery in California

March 9 2018

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This Wednesday, Aug. 23, 2017, file photo provided by U.S. Customs and Border Protection shows an agent holding a male tiger cub that was confiscated at the U.S. border crossing at Otay Mesa southeast of downtown San Diego. The cub, now much larger than in this photo, that lives at the San Diego Zoo Safari Park in Escondido, Calif., has undergone emergency surgery to fix internal problems he probably had before being rescued. The park says the male cub, named Moka, had the operation on Tuesday, March 6, 2018, and appears to be recovering, but he'll remain under observation. (U.S. Customs and Border Protection via AP, File)

A Bengal tiger cub that was being smuggled into California from Mexico has undergone emergency surgery to fix internal problems he probably had before being rescued.

The San Diego Zoo Safari Park says the male cub, named Moka, had the operation Tuesday and appears to be recovering but he'll remain under observation.

The park says Moka had abdominal adhesions and recently had shown signs of ill health.

Moka was 6 weeks old when he was found on the floor of a car last August at a San Diego border checkpoint. Tigers are endangered and it's illegal to import them without a permit.

He was handed over to the park.

The driver, who'd claimed he bought the cub as a pet, was sentenced to six months in prison.



This Nov. 28, 2017 file photo shows a rescued Bengal tiger cub in its home at the San Diego Zoo Safari Park in Escondido, Calif. The Bengal tiger cub that was smuggled into California from Mexico has undergone emergency surgery to fix internal problems he probably had before being rescued. The San Diego Zoo Safari Park says the male cub, named Moka, had the operation on Tuesday, March 6, 2018, and appears to be recovering but he'll remain under observation. (Nelvin C. Cepeda/The San Diego Union-Tribune via AP, File)

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