


Guilty plea in Hotchkiss murder

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Edgar Macias-Moreno on Thursday pleaded guilty to second-degree murder as an act of domestic violence in the 2018 strangulation death of Madelaine Loh.

His plea agreement calls for between 25 and 40 years in prison. The felony-2 offense is classed as a crime of violence. Sentencing has been set for Nov. 15.

Macias-Moreno was initially charged with first-degree murder and animal cruelty; these charges were dismissed under the plea deal. Prosecutors said Loh's family was not opposed to the agreement.

Macias-Moreno killed Loh in June 2018, during an argument over money at their shared camping trailer, he then drove her body into Utah and left her in the desert. He also dropped her dog off by the side of the road while en route to Utah, authorities said. The dog was recovered alive.

Loh's disappearance triggered a missing persons investigation for both her and Macias-Moreno. That search ended when Macias-Moreno paid an early-morning visit to authorities in Delta and told them he was the reason she was missing.

Utah authorities later recovered Loh's body and her burned-out vehicle, which Macias-Moreno reportedly lit on fire in an aborted suicide attempt.