

## STAFF SUMMARY FOR JUNE 20 - 21, 2018

**8. ANNUAL WILDLIFE PROSECUTOR OF THE YEAR AWARD****Today's Item**Information Action 

Announce Deputy District Attorney Adrian Kamada as recipient of the 2017 Wildlife Prosecutor of the Year Award.

**Summary of Previous/Future Actions (N/A)****Background**

In 2016, FGC adopted a formal policy "to honor a courtroom champion of California's fish, wildlife and natural resources, a person who tirelessly prosecutes fish, wildlife, natural resource and environmental crimes in California courts. The Commission will recognize this prosecutor through an annual Wildlife Prosecutor of the Year Award."

Annually, the DFW Law Enforcement Division makes up to four nominations and FGC awards a California district attorney or deputy district attorney with the award, which honors those attorneys who, in the previous three years, went above and beyond to prosecute wildlife crimes. Specifically, the award recognizes a district attorney or deputy district attorney who exhibits one or more of the following:

- (1) exceptional skill and an outstanding commitment to protecting California's fish, wildlife and natural resources;
- (2) superior performance in prosecuting wildlife, natural resource and environmental crimes;
- (3) relentless pursuit of justice for the most egregious violators and keen ability to prosecute complex, controversial or landmark cases; or
- (4) exemplary work promoting and maintaining a collaborative working relationship with wildlife officers in pursuit of conserving our natural resources.

Selection is based upon recommendations from DFW Law Enforcement Division staff that regularly works with the various district attorneys' offices.

For this year's award, FGC honors Deputy District Attorney Adrian Kamada from the Humboldt County District Attorney's office. Exhibit 1 provides details about the ways in which Mr. Kamada went above and beyond to prosecute wildlife crimes in the previous three years.

**Significant Public Comments (N/A)****Recommendation (N/A)****Exhibits**

1. [Deputy District Attorney Adrian Kamada nomination](#)

**Motion/Direction (N/A)**

**CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND WILDLIFE  
LAW ENFORCEMENT DIVISION  
2017 PROSECUTOR OF THE YEAR AWARD NOMINATION**

***Adrian Kamada  
Deputy District Attorney  
Humboldt County***

DDA Kamada began working at the Humboldt County District Attorney's Office in 2014, assigned as the lead prosecutor on all of the environmental cases for the county. Kamada, who was raised in Humboldt, appreciates and understands the importance of the county's diverse fish and wildlife species and the habitats that they depend upon. Living in Humboldt County, DDA Kamada saw firsthand the destruction caused by poaching, polluting and the widespread habitat destruction resulting from unlawful cannabis grows throughout the county. As a new DDA, Kamada quickly reached out to the local law enforcement agencies and began working closely with them to understand the investigative challenges they were facing.

In 2015, DDA Kamada formed the Humboldt County Environmental Crimes Task Force, a group of willing state and local agencies that meet several times a year to discuss ongoing environmental crimes, promote interagency communication and problem solving, and allow the various agencies to speak directly with DDA Kamada about cases. DDA Kamada has also accompanied wildlife conservation officers on general patrol and on search warrant services several times a year. This promotes a strong working relationship with the local Wildlife Conservation Officers, allows Kamada to see firsthand the challenges Wildlife Conservation Officers face and to see the egregious nature of the violations associated with the cases that he prosecutes.

During the prosecution of his cases, DDA Kamada encourages judgements that correct environmental damage and prevent it from happening in the future, not just punishing the responsible parties. DDA Kamada has become one of the go-to DA's in the state when it comes to the successful prosecution of cases involving environmental crimes associated with cannabis cultivation. DDA Kamada has taught several seminars on the topic to both attorneys and law enforcement personnel throughout the state. DDA Kamada has shown considerable skill and commitment to the prosecution of fish, wildlife and environmental crime cases as the following small sample of successful cases illustrates:

- In 2015, Wildlife Officers contacted a man near the Eel River after observing him driving on a river bar while shining a high-powered light and discarding litter on the river bar. Wildlife Officers served a search warrant on the subject's residence, where the officers discovered additional evidence of spotlighting and poaching activity. Following the successful prosecution of the case by DDA Kamada, the suspect was sentenced to three years of probation, 200 hours of community service, and a prohibition of hunting, the mandatory completion of the hunter safety program as well as the forfeiture of three firearms, ammunition, knives, and unlawfully possessed deer parts.
- In 2016, following a meeting with the Humboldt County Environmental Crimes Task Force, DDA Kamada asked Wildlife Officers to write a search warrant for a property that had several Fish and Game Code, Humboldt County Code, Public Resource Code and Health and Safety Code violations on it. All of the violations were associated with the

unlawful cultivation of cannabis along the Van Duzen River. The Van Duzen River contains Chinook and coho salmon, as well as steelhead trout. Upon the service of the search warrant, nine violations of Fish and Game Code were documented. Shortly after the service of the search warrant, the property owner died, complicating the case. DDA Kamada continued to fight to fix the egregious conditions documented on the property. DDA Kamada negotiated with attorneys representing the next-of-kin to have them completely restore the property to the satisfaction of CDFW. In 2017, DDA Kamada, a CDFW Wildlife Conservation Officer and a CDFW Senior Environmental Scientist inspected the property, confirming that it was totally restored. The restoration included the complete removal of a building, several unlawful diversions as well as hundreds of pounds of trash and hazardous materials, and thousands of yards of black water pipe. DDA Kamada also attached terms to the agreement that no cannabis cultivation shall occur in the property within 1,000 feet of the river, which, given the steep topography, excludes much of the property from similar, environmentally damaging activity.

- In 2016, a Wildlife Officer attempted to stop a vehicle that was actively spotlighting deer on a remote dirt road in Humboldt County. Upon attempting to initiate a traffic stop, one of the two subjects in the vehicle began shooting at the Wildlife Conservation Officer while the other subject sped away. During the course of the pursuit, ten shots were fired at the officer. The suspects eventually crashed the vehicle, fled into the woods on foot, and evaded capture. Investigators later identified the two subjects. In August 2017, after many months of investigation and surveillance, the suspect who shot at the Wildlife Conservation Officer turned himself in. Upon the successful prosecution of the case by DDA Kamada, the shooter was sentenced to 20 years in prison and the driver was sentenced to a suspended sentence of eight years in prison.