

NEWS RELEASE



***OFFICE OF THE UNITED STATES ATTORNEY
SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA
San Diego, California***

***United States Attorney
Karen P. Hewitt***

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For Immediate Release

NEWS RELEASE SUMMARY - April 17, 2008

United States Attorney Karen P. Hewitt announced that Kent Douglas Trego pled guilty today in federal court in San Diego to threatening a volunteer of the Animal Protection and Rescue League (“APRL”). Mr. Trego pled guilty to Count One of the Indictment, which charged him with threatening to retaliate against a federal witness, in violation of Title 18, United States Code, Section 1513(b)(2). Mr. Trego tendered his guilty plea before United States Magistrate Judge Louisa S. Porter, subject to final acceptance of the plea by the Honorable Roger T. Benitez, United States District Judge.

According to Assistant U. S. Attorney Mitch Dembin, who is prosecuting the case, in connection with his guilty plea, Mr. Trego admitted that on September 22, 2007, he accompanied two scuba divers onto the beach at the La Jolla Children’s Pool. The scuba divers proceeded into the water, causing approximately 18 of the approximately 50 harbor seals resting on the beach to flush into the water. A volunteer of the APRL videotaped these activities. After the divers entered the water, the APRL volunteer recorded the license plate

number of the vehicle in which the divers arrived. The volunteer and Mr. Trego exchanged words at that time and the volunteer reported the entire transaction to federal law enforcement agents of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA). After an investigation, the two divers were identified and ticketed for misdemeanor violations of the Marine Mammal Protection Act, Title 16, United States Code, Section 1362, et seq. The tickets were issued on December 31, 2007, and January 11, 2008. Mr. Trego admitted that the divers told him that they had been ticketed. On January 12, 2008, using a publicly-accessible computer at the Riford Library in La Jolla, Mr. Trego composed and sent a threatening electronic mail to the APRL. The e-mail had the subject line "Revenge on [witness]" and the text of the message, excluding the name of the APRL volunteer, reads as follows:

Two divers who used the Children's Pool in September have been cited by federal wildlife marshalls for disturbing the seals. [Witness] was apparently the one who turned them in.

The problem is now that revenge will be taken out on [witness]. Many of the local divers have close friends in the California motorcycle clubs. As is this case, motorcycle club members have been contacted about [witness] and [he/she] will be dealt with very harshly, if [he/she] is not killed.

They know that if [he/she] is not in San Diego, [he/she] may be found in San Francisco. Either San Diego or Oakland hit hogs will be involved in [his/her] punishment.

[He/She] has brought this on [himself/herself].

This communication was received by the APRL, which reported the threat to federal authorities. Mr. Trego admitted that his intent in transmitting the threat was to retaliate against the APRL volunteer for providing information to federal authorities resulting in the tickets issued to the divers. Mr. Trego was indicted by a federal grand jury in San Diego on March 4, 2008, and arrested March 7, 2008.

This case was investigated by Special Agents of the United States Fish and Wildlife Service, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, University of California at San Diego (UCSD) Police

Department, and the Violent Crime and Cybercrime Squads of the San Diego Division of the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

Mr. Trego is scheduled to appear next in court before United States District Court Judge Roger T. Benitez for acceptance of the plea on April 28, 2008, and for sentencing on July 7, 2008.

DEFENDANT

Case Number: 08cr0618-BEN

Kent Douglas Trego

SUMMARY OF CHARGE

Title 18, United States Code, Section 1513(b)(2) - Threatening a Federal Witness
Maximum Penalties: 10 years' imprisonment and \$250,000 fine

AGENCIES

U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Federal Bureau of Investigation
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
University of California (San Diego) Police Department