

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 - July 7, 2008

United States Attorney Karen P. Hewitt announced that Kent Douglas Trego was sentenced today for having threatened a volunteer of the Animal Protection and Rescue League (“APRL”). Trego pled guilty on April 17, 2008 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). Trego has been held without bail since his arrest. Considering that Trego, at the time of sentencing, had served approximately 4.5 months in custody, the Honorable Roger T. Benitez, United States District Judge, sentenced Trego to serve five years of supervised probation. As part of probation, Trego must spend 180 days on GPS-monitored house arrest. The Court also required Trego to undergo 52 weeks of mental health counseling, including anger management and submit to drug and alcohol counseling and testing. Trego must keep away from the La Jolla Children’s Pool and cannot use a computer unless it is monitored by the U.S. Probation Department.

According to Assistant U. S. Attorney Mitch Dembin, who prosecuted the case, Trego admitted in court that on September 22, 2007, he accompanied two scuba divers on to 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 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. 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, Trego, using the online identity "Biker Bobbie," composed and sent an electronic mail to the APRL (info@aprl.org) . The mail was sent from the account "deathtosealwatch@yahoo.com ," created by the defendant on December 1, 2007, and used to issue two previous threatening communications to the APRL and to another APRL volunteer. The previous threats were sent on December 1 and December 5, 2007. The mail on January 12, 2008, had the subject line "Revenge on [witness]," and the text of the message, excluding the name of the APRL volunteer, was 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. 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.

This case was investigated by Special Agents of the United States Fish and Wildlife Service, NOAA, UCSD Police and the Violent Crime and Cybercrime Squads of the San Diego Division of the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

DEFENDANT

Case Number: 08cr0618-BEN

Kent Douglas Trego

SUMMARY OF CHARGE

Title 18, United States Code, Section 1513(b)(2) - Threatening a Federal Witness

AGENCIES

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