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Contact: Richard Jackoway at

RJackoway@sandiego.gov or (619) 533-6176

Deputy City Attorney Jordan DuBois Honored as Wildlife Prosecutor of the Year

High-profile cases included prosecuting ivory traffickers

Deputy City Attorney Jordan B. DuBois, who prosecuted two high-profile cases against ivory traffickers operating in San Diego, has been named California Fish and Game Commission's 2022 Wildlife Prosecutor of the Year.

The award honors a courtroom champion with exceptional skill and an outstanding commitment to protecting California's fish, wildlife, and natural resources. The Commission selected DuBois, who has been prosecuting such cases for the San Diego City Attorney's Office since 2018, and successfully prosecuted two high-profile ivory-selling cases. DuBois's nomination received a unanimous vote from the Commission.

DuBois, a native of San Diego, said he was drawn to environmental law while working as a law school intern at the San Diego City Attorney's Office.

"It means a lot to me to be able to protect my city. I'm protecting the environment itself, but I'm also protecting everyone who uses the environment – our tourists, your average San Diegan who likes to go to the beach, our commercial fishing industry, our sports fishing industry," DuBois said. **"It's at the intersection of all these different aspects of what it means to be a San Diegan."**

City Attorney Mara W. Elliott said DuBois' work deserves to be recognized on a statewide level.

"We have long known how fortunate San Diego is to have Jordan working diligently to conserve our abundant, but fragile, natural resources," City Attorney Mara W. Elliott said. **"This honor invigorates the team of prosecutors and investigators who protect our environment in collaboration with the wardens at California Fish and Game."**

The ivory cases are prime examples of the importance of DuBois' work in the City Attorney's Nuisance Abatement Unit (NAU). Although selling ivory has been banned in the United States since the 1970s, the

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1200 Third Avenue, Suite 1620, San Diego, California 92101-4188 (619) 236-6220

law was poorly written and few cases were successfully prosecuted until California passed a new law in 2014.

Among the recent highlight of DuBois's work:

- In February 2019, a La Jolla gallery owner and his employee were convicted of allegedly trafficking in ivory after a sting operation in which authorities seized more than 300 pieces valued at \$1.3 million. Carlton Gallery Owner Victor Hyman Cohen and an employee were fined a combined \$210,000. Most of the ivory came from elephant tusks and some from hippopotamus teeth.
- In January 2022, a Carmel Valley man was convicted of selling ivory carvings from his garage and ordered to surrender his entire collection. Stephen Shu Wang, 54, was ordered to surrender all 200 or so ivory artifacts and art pieces that were confiscated from his home.
- Last week, DuBois filed a complaint against two fishermen who were operating recreational sportfishing excursions and then selling the fish commercially, which is illegal, and also selling fish without the required licenses. Their failure to abide by state regulations impaired the ability of the Fish and Wildlife Department to monitor commercial fish sales and inhibited the Department's ability to assess the health and viability of local fish populations. Chronic overfishing can damage vital ocean ecosystems and natural resources. The scheme also gave the brothers an unfair business advantage over their competitors.

DuBois emphasized that successful convictions take an entire team. He pointed to the work of his fellow prosecutors and investigators in the City Attorney's Office as well as Fish and Wildlife personnel as crucial to protecting the state's environmental resources.

DuBois works in the NAU, a specialized unit within the City Attorney's Office, devoted to aggressively enforcing public nuisance, land use, and environmental laws in the City of San Diego. NAU works in partnership with City departments, Council Offices, community groups, and the police to proactively preserve and enhance the quality of life in our communities.

The unit serves as a nationwide model for cities seeking to establish an aggressive nuisance abatement program. NAU is committed to protecting each of our diverse communities and our environment.

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