



## San Diego City Attorney Mara W. Elliott

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### **City Attorney Prosecutes Lobster Poachers Custody and thousands of dollars in fines ordered**

In a series of cases investigated by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife and prosecuted by Deputy City Attorneys Cheryl Shitabata and Michael Neumeyer of the City Attorney's Consumer and Environmental Protection Unit, four lobster poachers were fined a total of \$26,750 for unlawfully taking over 250 California spiny lobsters, the vast majority of which were undersized, from the South La Jolla State Marine Reserve.

On June 1, 2017, San Diego County resident Bryan John Gladis pled guilty to charges that he illegally poached 185 spiny lobsters on two separate occasions from the South La Jolla State Marine Reserve. Under a plea agreement reached with the City Attorney's Office, Gladis was placed on five years of probation, ordered to serve 120 days in custody, pay a fine of \$11,250, forfeit all of the fishing gear seized, and sell his fishing boat. He must also stay away from the South La Jolla State Marine Reserve.

In a separate case, San Diego County residents Minh T. Ly, Jesse Casarez Martinez, Jr., and Phillip L. Martinez each pled guilty to misdemeanor criminal violations for unlawfully taking 74 lobsters. Under plea agreements reached with the City Attorney's Office, the three men were placed on three years of probation, ordered to pay fines of \$5,000, \$500 and \$10,000, respectively, and ordered to stay at least 100 yards away from the South La Jolla State Marine Reserve. Jesse Casarez Martinez, Jr. and Phillip L. Martinez were also ordered not to take or possess spiny lobsters from the City's coastal waters. In addition, Minh T. Ly and Phillip L. Martinez were each ordered to perform ten days of public work service.

The South La Jolla State Marine Reserve is considered a "no take" area where the commercial or recreational taking of any living marine resource is prohibited. This and other marine reserves across the State exist to protect habitat and ecosystems as well as conserve biological diversity by providing a sanctuary for fish and other sea life.

**"I'm proud of the role the City Attorney's Office is playing in preserving our City's coastal environment,"** San Diego City Attorney Mara Elliott said. **"We will continue to work with the California Department of Fish and Wildlife to protect precious marine resources so that they are available for future generations."**

Anyone who believes they are a witness to unlawful hunting, fishing, or pollution is encouraged to call [CalTIP](#), California Department of Fish and Wildlife's (CDFW) confidential secret witness program, at (888) 334-2258. Anyone with a cell phone may send a tip to CDFW by texting "CALTIP", followed by a space and the message, to 847411 (tip411). Callers may remain anonymous and a reward may result from successful capture and prosecution.

The City Attorney's [Consumer & Environmental Protection Unit](#) (CEPU) maintains a Consumer Hotline at (619) 533-5600, for consumers to call to report fraud, waste, or abuse. The duties of CEPU include investigating and prosecuting false advertising, unfair business practices, and environmental crimes.

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