

Staff Summary for October 13-16, 2026

Executive Session**Today's Item****Information** ☐**Action** ☒

Executive session includes four standing topics:

- (A) Pending litigation to which the Commission is a party
- (B) Possible litigation involving the Commission
- (C) Staffing
- (D) Deliberation and action on license and permit items

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

During the public portion of its meeting, the Commission will call a recess and reconvene in a closed session pursuant to the authority of California Government Code Section 11126, subdivisions (a), (c)(3) and (e)(1). The Commission will address four items in closed session: Pending litigation, possible litigation, staffing, and license and permit items.

(A) Pending Litigation to Which the Commission is a Party

See agenda for a complete list of pending civil litigation to which the Commission is a party, at the time the agenda was made public. At any meeting, during executive session, the Commission may take action related to pending litigation.

(B) Possible Litigation Involving the Commission**(C) Staffing**

For details about staffing, generally, see the executive director's report under Agenda Item 3(A) for today's meeting.

The Commission is authorized to employ an executive director pursuant to California Fish and Game Code Section 104. The Commission may choose to conduct a performance evaluation of the executive director or discuss the process for such a performance evaluation. Melissa Miller-Henson is the Commission's current executive director; the Commission appointed her in September 2019.

(D) Deliberation and Action on License and Permit Items

- I. Consider the accusation in Agency Case No. 26ALJ40-FGC, regarding revocation of the commercial fishing privileges — including ability to obtain a commercial fishing license and commercial fish receiver's license — of Chad Freeman.

The Department filed an accusation (Exhibit 1) with the Commission on August 24, 2026; the accusation requests the Commission revoke Chad Freeman's (Respondent) commercial fishing privileges, including the ability to obtain a commercial fishing license and commercial fish receiver's license. The Department served Respondent on September 3, 2026. Respondent must file a notice of

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defense with the Commission within 15 days after service of the accusation in order to request a hearing or object to the accusation. The Commission has not received a notice of defense from Respondent.

The Department submitted a letter to the Commission with supporting records attached on September 29, 2026 (Exhibit 2). The letter requests that the Commission revoke Mr. Freeman's Commercial Fishing License and Commercial Fish Receiver's License consistent with the accusation, summarizes the violations in the accusation, and provides evidence of the violations.

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

Commission staff: Revoke the commercial fishing license, commercial fish receiver's license, and the privileges to obtain those licenses of Chad Freeman in FGC Case No. 26ALJ40-FGC.

Exhibits

1. [Chad Freeman Accusation](#), received August 24, 2026
2. [Letter from the Department](#) regarding Chad Freeman

Motion

Moved by _____ and seconded by _____ that the Commission revokes Chad Freeman's commercial fishing license, commercial fish receiver's license, and privileges to obtain those licenses in FGC Case No. 25ALJ40-FGC.

COOPER WILCE (SBN 344611)
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OFFICE OF ADMINISTRATIVE HEARINGS
BEFORE THE FISH AND GAME COMMISSION

In the Matter of the Accusation Against)
)
) ACCUSATION
)
CHAD FREEMAN,)
)
Respondent.)
)
)
)
)

PARTIES

1. Nathaniel Arnold ("Complainant") is the Chief of the Law Enforcement Division for the Department of Fish and Wildlife ("Department") and brings this Accusation solely in his official capacity.
2. On or about March 4, 2026, the Department renewed a Commercial Fishing License ("License") issued to Respondent, CHAD FREEMAN ("FREEMAN"). The License was first purchased by FREEMAN on or about July 18, 2017. FREEMAN did not have the License between on or about April 1, 2021 and May 9, 2022.
3. On or about April 15, 2025, the Department renewed a Commercial Fish Receiver's License ("Receiver's License") issued to Respondent, FREEMAN. The Receiver's License was first purchased on or about July 18, 2017. FREEMAN did

In the Matter of the Accusation Against Chad Freeman

not have the Receiver's License between on or about January 1, 2020 and June 22, 2022.

JURISDICTION

This Accusation is brought before the Fish and Game Commission ("Commission") under the authority of the following laws.

4. Fish and Game Code section 86 ("Section 86"), which states:

"Take" means hunt, pursue, catch, capture, or kill, or attempt to hunt, pursue, catch, capture, or kill.

5. Fish and Game Code section 7857(b)(2) ("Section 7857(b)(2)"), which states:

Unless otherwise specified, the following conditions apply to each commercial fishing license, permit, or other entitlement issued to take, possess aboard a boat, or land fish for commercial purposes and to each commercial boat registration issued by the department. ...

(b) The commission, after notice and opportunity for hearing, may suspend, revoke, or cancel commercial fishing privileges for a period of time to be determined by the commission for the following reasons:

...
(2) A violation of this code, the terms of the permit or other entitlement, or the regulations adopted pursuant thereto, by the licensee, permittee, person holding the entitlement, or his or her agent, servant, employee, or person acting under the licensee's, permittee's, or entitled person's direction or control.

6. Fish and Game Code section 8043 ("Section 8043"), which states in part:

(a) The following persons shall report all fish sales, deliveries, transfers, and landings using an electronic fish ticket as prescribed pursuant to regulations adopted by the commission:

(1) A person who is required to be licensed under Article 7 (commencing with Section 8030) to conduct the activities of a fish receiver, as described in Section 8033.

(2) A commercial fisher who sells, delivers, or transfers fish to a person who is not a fish receiver licensed under Article 7 (commencing with Section 8030).

(3) A commercial fisher who sells, delivers, or transfers live marine fish for use exclusively as live bait that are not brought ashore to a person who is not a fish receiver licensed under Article 7 (commencing with Section 8030).

(4) A person licensed under Article 7 (commencing with Section 8030) who brings ashore their own fish as described in Section 8033 or 8033.5.

(5) A commercial fisher licensed pursuant to Section 8033.5 who sells fish to persons not licensed to receive fish for commercial purposes pursuant to Article 7 (commencing with Section 8030).

...
(c) A person identified in paragraph (1), (2), or (3) of subdivision (a) shall complete the electronic fish ticket as prescribed by regulation at the time of receipt, purchase, or transfer of fish, whichever occurs first. A person identified in paragraph (4) of subdivision (a) shall complete the electronic fish ticket as prescribed by regulation at the time the fish are brought ashore. A person identified in paragraph (5) of subdivision (a) shall complete the electronic fish ticket either at the time of individual sale or at the completion of sales for the calendar day of sales pursuant to Section 8043.2.

(d) With the exception of live marine fish for use exclusively as bait that is not subsequently brought ashore or as otherwise prescribed by regulation, the receipt, purchase, or transfer of fish shall not occur at sea or from vessel to vessel.

(e) A person taking, purchasing, or receiving fish, whether or not licensed under Article 7 (commencing with Section 8030), shall sign the original paper hard copy of the electronic fish ticket as prescribed by regulation.

7. Fish and Game Code section 8046(a) ("Section 8046(a)"), which states:

(a) The electronic fish ticket made under Section 8043 shall be submitted to the department within three business days of the landing unless otherwise specified in regulations. The original signed copy of the paper landing receipt made under Section 8043.1 shall be delivered to the department on or before the 16th or last day of the month in which the fish were landed, whichever date occurs first after the landing. A copy of the electronic fish ticket or landing receipt shall be delivered to the commercial fisherman at the time of the purchase or receipt of the fish. That copy of the electronic fish ticket or landing receipt shall be retained by the commercial fisherman for a period of four years and shall be available for inspection at any time during that period by the department. A copy of the electronic fish ticket or landing receipt shall be kept by the person licensed pursuant to Article 7 (commencing with Section 8030), or live bait dealer registered with the department, who filled out the electronic fish ticket or landing receipt for a period of four years and shall be available for inspection at any time within that period by the department.

8. Fish and Game Code section 8050(a) ("Section 8050(a)"), which states:

(a) In addition to the receipt required by Section 8043, every person licensed under Article 7 (commencing with Section 8030), and any commercial fisherman who sells fish to persons who are not licensed under Article 7 (commencing with Section 8030), and any person who deals in fresh or frozen fish for profit, shall keep accounting records in which all of the following shall be recorded:

(c) The accounting records shall be maintained by both buyer and seller for a period of three years and upon request, shall be open for inspection during normal business hours by the department. The accounting records shall be maintained within the State of California.

9. Fish and Game Code section 12012(a) ("Section 12012(a)"), which states:

(a) A person who illegally takes, possesses, imports, exports, sells, purchases, barter, trades, or exchanges a bird, fish, mammal, reptile, amphibian, or part of any of those animals, for profit or personal gain, is guilty of a misdemeanor punishable by a fine of not less than five thousand dollars (\$5,000) nor more than forty thousand dollars (\$40,000), or imprisonment in the county jail for not more than one year, or by both that fine and imprisonment.

10. Fish and Game Code section 12158.5 ("Section 12158.5"), which states:

For the purpose of invoking any provision of this code, or any rule, regulation, or order made or adopted under this code, relating to the suspension, revocation, or forfeiture of any license or permit, a plea of nolo contendere or "no contest" to, or forfeiture of bail from, a charge of a violation of any provision of this code, or any rule, regulation, or order made or adopted under this code, is a conviction of a violation thereof.

11. California Code of Regulations, Title 14, section 1.14 ("Section 1.14"), which states:

Fish, amphibians, reptiles, mollusks and crustaceans may be taken only in the amounts, only during the open season and only with the gear authorized and shall not be taken otherwise.

12. California Code of Regulations, Title 14, section 197 ("Section 197"), which states in part,:

(a) Definitions. The following definitions apply to this section:

(1) "Commercial fisherman" has the same meaning as found in Fish and Game Code Section 8040.

(2) "Dock ticket" means written documentation that is legible and in English, for landing data as described in subsection (e)(3) of these regulations, and is used when submission of the electronic fish ticket cannot be performed immediately upon landing.

(3) "Electronic fish ticket" means a web-based form that is used to send landing data pursuant to Fish and Game Code Section 8043 to the department via the

1 Pacific States Marine Fisheries Commission. The web-based form is accessed at
2 <https://etix.psmfc.org>.

3 (4) "Fish business" has the same meaning as found in Fish and Game Code Section
4 8032.

5 (5) "Fish receiver" has the same meaning as found in Fish and Game Code Section
6 8033.

7 (6) "Fish transportation receipt" means a paper form provided by the department
8 for recording commercial catch that is transported from the point of first landing to
9 a fish receiver.

10 (7) "Functional" means that the software and hardware requirements are met and
11 submission to Pacific States Marine Fisheries Commission can be executed
12 effectively by the equipment.

13 (8) "Land" or "Landing" means to begin transfer of fish, offloading fish, or to
14 offload fish from any vessel. Once transfer of fish begins, all fish aboard the vessel
15 are counted as part of the landing.

16 (9) "Landing receipt" means a paper form provided by the department for
17 recording the sale or delivery of commercial catch.

18 (10) "Record" means the action of documenting electronic fish ticket information
19 on a dock ticket.

20 (11) "Submit" means to transmit via a web-based form final electronic fish ticket
21 information.
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23
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CONVICTION

13. On or about February 15, 2024, in *People v. Chad Freeman*, San Diego County Superior Court case number CN452248, San Diego County District Attorney's Office filed a criminal complaint alleging a felony violation of Revenue and Tax (R&T) Code section 55363, misdemeanor violations of R&T Code section 6071, Health and Safety (H&S) Code section 11358(c), H&S Code section 11359(b), R&T Code section 6452(c), and five misdemeanor counts of Fish and Game Code section 12012(a).
14. On or about June 27, 2024, Respondent FREEMAN pled guilty to misdemeanor counts of R&T Code section 6071, H&S Code section 11358(c), and Fish and Game Code section 12012(a). Respondent FREEMAN was sentenced to 1 year summary probation and assessed a \$663 fine.

**FIRST
CAUSE FOR DISCIPLINE**

15. Respondent FREEMAN is subject to disciplinary action under Section 7857(b)(2) in that he violated Section 12012(a), a violation for which the License and Receiver's License may be revoked. The circumstances are as follows:
 - a. On or about July 6, 2021, Respondent FREEMAN sold a fish to a restaurant for approximately \$1141, without first landing the fish as required by Section 8043(a)(2), in violation of Section 12012(a).
 - b. On or about June 27, 2024, Respondent FREEMAN pled guilty to Fish and Game Code section 12012(A).

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**SECOND
CAUSE FOR DISCIPLINE**

16. Respondent FREEMAN is subject to disciplinary action under Section 7857(b)(2) in that he violated Section 12012(a), a violation for which the License and Receiver's License may be revoked. The circumstances are as follows:
- a. On or about July 20, 2021, Respondent FREEMAN sold a fish to a restaurant for approximately \$2100, without first landing the fish as required by Section 8043(a)(2), in violation of Section 12012(a).
 - b. On or about June 27, 2024, Respondent FREEMAN pled guilty to Fish and Game Code section 12012(A).

**THIRD
CAUSE FOR DISCIPLINE**

17. Respondent FREEMAN is subject to disciplinary action under Section 7857(b)(2) in that he violated Section 12012(a), a violation for which the License and Receiver's License may be revoked. The circumstances are as follows:
- a. On or about July 21, 2021, Respondent FREEMAN sold two fish to a restaurant for approximately \$490 and \$500, without first landing the fish as required by Section 8043(a)(2), in violation of Section 12012(a).
 - b. On or about June 27, 2024, Respondent FREEMAN pled guilty to Fish and Game Code section 12012(A).

**FOURTH
CAUSE FOR DISCIPLINE**

18. Respondent FREEMAN is subject to disciplinary action under Section 7857(b)(2) in that he violated Section 12012(a), a violation for which the License and Receiver's License may be revoked. The circumstances are as follows:

In the Matter of the Accusation Against Chad Freeman

a. On or about July 26, 2021, Respondent FREEMAN sold a fish to a restaurant for approximately \$1351, without first landing the fish as required by Section 8043(a)(2), in violation of Section 12012(a).

b. On or about June 27, 2024, Respondent FREEMAN pled guilty to Fish and Game Code section 12012(A).

FIFTH CAUSE FOR DISCIPLINE

19. Respondent FREEMAN is subject to disciplinary action under Section 7857(b)(2) in that he violated Section 12012(a), a violation for which the License and Receiver's License may be revoked. The circumstances are as follows:

a. On or about August 14, 2021, Respondent FREEMAN sold a fish to a restaurant for approximately \$1008, without first landing the fish as required by Section 8043(a)(2), in violation of Section 12012(a).

b. On or about June 27, 2024, Respondent FREEMAN pled guilty to Fish and Game Code section 12012(A).

SIXTH CAUSE FOR DISCIPLINE

20. Respondent FREEMAN is subject to disciplinary action under Section 7857(b)(2) in that he violated Section 12012(a), a violation for which the License and Receiver's License may be revoked. The circumstances are as follows:

a. On or about August 23, 2021, Respondent FREEMAN sold two fish to a restaurant for approximately \$500 and \$454, without first landing the fish as required by Section 8043(a)(2), in violation of Section 12012(a).

b. On or about June 27, 2024, Respondent FREEMAN pled guilty to Fish and Game Code section 12012(A).

**SEVENTH
CAUSE FOR DISCIPLINE**

21. Respondent FREEMAN is subject to disciplinary action under Section 7857(b)(2) in that he violated Section 12012(a), a violation for which the License and Receiver's License may be revoked. The circumstances are as follows:
- a. On or about August 30, 2021, Respondent FREEMAN sold a fish to a restaurant for approximately \$1080, without first landing the fish as required by Section 8043(a)(2), in violation of Section 12012(a).
 - b. On or about June 27, 2024, Respondent FREEMAN pled guilty to Fish and Game Code section 12012(A).

**EIGHTH
CAUSE FOR DISCIPLINE**

22. Respondent FREEMAN is subject to disciplinary action under Section 7857(b)(2) in that he violated Section 12012(a), a violation for which the License and Receiver's License may be revoked. The circumstances are as follows:
- a. On or about October 12, 2021, Respondent FREEMAN sold four fish to a restaurant for approximately \$500 each, without first landing the fish as required by Section 8043(a)(2), in violation of Section 12012(a).
 - b. On or about June 27, 2024, Respondent FREEMAN pled guilty to Fish and Game Code section 12012(A).

**NINETH
CAUSE FOR DISCIPLINE**

23. Respondent FREEMAN is subject to disciplinary action under Section 7857(b)(2) in that he violated Section 12012(a), a violation for which the License and Receiver's License may be revoked. The circumstances are as follows:

In the Matter of the Accusation Against Chad Freeman

a. On or about May 4, 2022, Respondent FREEMAN sold a fish to a restaurant for approximately \$840, without first landing the fish as required by Section 8043(a)(2), in violation of Section 12012(a).

b. On or about June 27, 2024, Respondent FREEMAN pled guilty to Fish and Game Code section 12012(A).

TENTH CAUSE FOR DISCIPLINE

24. Respondent FREEMAN is subject to disciplinary action under Section 7857(b)(2) in that he violated Section 8046(a), a violation for which the License and Receiver's License may be revoked. The circumstances are as follows:

a. Between on or about April 1, 2020 and January 19, 2023, Respondent FREEMAN landed at least 40 fish, without submitting a landing receipt documenting the take, in violation of Section 8046(a).

b. On or about July 30, 2023, Respondent FREEMAN refused to provide any landing receipts to Department Wardens, stating he did not maintain such records, in violation of Section 8046(a).

ELEVENTH CAUSE FOR DISCIPLINE

25. Respondent FREEMAN is subject to disciplinary action under Section 7857(b)(2) in that he violated Section 8050(c), a violation for which the License and Receiver's License may be revoked. The circumstances are as follows:

a. Between on or about April 1, 2020 and January 19, 2023, Respondent FREEMAN landed at least 40 fish, without keeping accounting records, in violation of Section 8050(c).

b. On or about July 30, 2023, Respondent FREEMAN refused to provide any accounting records to Department Wardens, stating he did not maintain such records, in violation of Section 8050(c).

PRAYER

WHEREFORE, Complainant prays that a hearing be held on the charges and that thereafter the Fish and Game Commission issues a decision:

(1) Revoking FREEMAN's Commercial Fishing License and all other commercial fishing privileges, including his privilege to obtain a Commercial Fishing License permanently;

(2) Revoking FREEMAN's Commercial Fish Receiver's License and all other commercial fish receiver privileges, including his privilege to obtain a Commercial Fish Receiver's License permanently; and

(3) Taking such other and further action as may be deemed just and proper.

Dated this 20 day of August 2026

DocuSigned by:

AA968532644A4EB...

NATHANIEL ARNOLD
COMPLAINANT
CHIEF, LAW ENFORCEMENT DIVISION

In the Matter of the Accusation Against Chad Freeman

VERIFICATION

I, Nathaniel Arnold, the undersigned, say:

I am a party to this action; the above document is true of my own knowledge, except as to the matters that are stated on my information and belief, and as to those matters, I believe them to be true.

I declare under penalty of perjury that the above is true and correct and that this declaration was executed on August 20, 2026, at 715 P St., Sacramento, CA 95814.

Date: 8/20/2026

DocuSigned by:

AA968532644A4EB...

Nathaniel Arnold
Declarant

1 *In the Matter of the Accusation Against CHAD FREEMAN*

2
3 **PROOF OF SERVICE**

4 I am a resident of the State of California, over the age of eighteen years, and not a party to
5 the within action. My business address is California Department of Fish and Wildlife, 715 P
6 Street, Sacramento, California 95814. On August 20, 2026, I served the within documents
described as:

- 7 **1. Accusation;**
8 **2. Notice of Defense (Under Govt. Code § 11506) (2 copies);**
9 **3. Statement to Respondent; and**
10 **4. California Government Code §§ 11507.5, 11507.6 and 11507.7 (2 copies).**

11 _____ (BY ELECTRONIC SERVICE) by transmitting via electronic service the documents listed
12 above to the e-mail address set forth below on this date at _____. The transmission was
13 reported as complete and without error.

14 X (BY CERTIFIED MAIL – RETURN RECIEPT REQUESTED) I am familiar with my
15 employer's collection and processing of correspondence for mailing with the United States
16 Postal Service and that each day mail is deposited with the United States Postal Service that
17 same day in the ordinary course of business. On the date set forth above, I served the
18 aforementioned documents on the party in said action by placing a true copy thereof
19 enclosed in a sealed envelope with postage thereon fully prepaid, for collection and mailing
20 on this date, following ordinary business practices in Sacramento, California addressed as
21 set forth below.

22 Chad Freeman
23 [REDACTED]
24 [REDACTED]

25 CERTIFIED MAIL NO.: 7021 1970 0002 0038 5623

26 I declare under penalty of perjury under the laws of the State of California that the foregoing
27 is true and correct. Executed on August 20, 2026, at Sacramento, California.

28
DocuSigned by:
[REDACTED]
9B06DA19D82146A...

Cooper Wilce



State of California – Natural Resources Agency
DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND WILDLIFE
P.O. Box 944209
Sacramento, CA 94244-2090
www.wildlife.ca.gov

GAVIN NEWSOM, Governor
MEGHAN HERTEL, Director



September 28, 2026

California Fish and Game Commission
715 P Street
16th Floor
Sacramento, CA 95124

Subject: 26ALJ40-FGC – Revocation of Chad Freeman’s Commercial Fishing License and Commercial Fish Receiver’s License

Dear Commissioners:

Pursuant to Government Code, section 11520, subdivision (a) (“Section 11520(a)”)¹, the Department is requesting that the Fish and Game Commission (“Commission”) permanently revoke Chad Freeman’s Commercial Fishing License and Commercial Fish Receiver’s License at its October 14-15, 2026 meeting, without holding a hearing on the matter.

The Commission may revoke Mr. Freeman’s Commercial Fishing License and Commercial Fish Receiver’s License at its October meeting because Mr. Freeman has waived his right to a hearing. On August 20, 2026, September 3, 2026, and September 11, 2026, the Department served Mr. Freeman with the Accusation by Certified Mail. (Exhibits 2 and 3.) Mr. Freeman declined to file a Notice of Defense requesting a hearing within 15 days of receiving the Accusation, i.e., by, at the latest, September 26, 2026, as required pursuant to Government Code section 11506 (“Section 11506”), subdivision (a)(1).² Accordingly, Mr. Freeman has waived his right to a hearing. Instead, the Commission may revoke his Commercial Fishing License and Commercial Fish Receiver’s License based upon his express admissions or other evidence at its October meeting.

Service

On August 20, 2026, the Department mailed the Accusation via certified mail to Mr. Freeman at the last address he furnished to the Department. (Exhibit 2.) The Accusation arrived at his address on August 24, 2026, but there was no authorized recipient available, and Mr. Freeman did not claim the Accusation at the post office. On September 3, 2026, the Department attempted again and sent another copy of the Accusation to the same address. (Exhibit 3.) On September 11, 2026, this second attempt was delivered and signed for by an individual at the last address furnished to the Department by Mr. Freeman. (Exhibits 3 and 4.)

¹ Section 11520 (a) states in part, “If the respondent either fails to file a notice of defense, or, as applicable, notice of participation, or to appear at the hearing, the agency may take action based upon the respondent’s express admissions or upon other evidence and affidavits may be used as evidence without any notice to respondent...”

² Government Code, section 11506, subdivision (a)(1) states, “Within 15 days after service of the accusation or District Statement of Reduction in Force the respondent may file with the agency a notice of defense, or, as applicable, notice of participation, in which the respondent may: (1) Request a hearing.”

Government Code section 11505³ (“Section 11505”), subdivision c, considers service of an accusation effective when mailed to the latest address on file with the agency when a statute or agency rule requires the respondent to file the respondent’s address with the agency and keep it updated. Fish and Game Code section 7857 (“Section 5857”), subdivision (m), states: “a person who holds a commercial fishing license, permit, registration, or other entitlement, who moves or acquires a new address shall notify the department of the old and new addresses within three months of acquiring the new address.” Mr. Freeman, an individual holding a commercial fishing license and commercial fish receiver’s license, provided his current mailing address to the Department on May 10, 2022, and has not updated it since as would be required by Section 7857. Both mailings of the Accusation were to the same address on file for Mr. Freeman with the Department.

Pursuant to Section 11505, Section 7857, and Fish and Game Code section 13⁴, service of the Accusation was accomplished both on August 20, and September 3, as service is effective upon the date of mailing to the last address furnished to the Department by the respondent. Regardless, the Accusation was left with someone at the last address furnished to the Department by Mr. Freeman on September 11, 2026.

Violations

As described in the Accusation and the attached exhibits submitted as uncontroverted evidence of the violations, Mr. Freeman has committed multiple violations of the Fish and Game Code, and regulations adopted pursuant to it. These violations include:

2020-2023 Landing Violations

- Between on or about April 1, 2020 and January 19, 2023, Mr. Freeman brought at least 40 fish ashore, without submitting a landing receipt documenting the take, in violation of Fish and Game Code section 8046(a). (Exhibit 5.)
- Between on or about April 1, 2020 and January 19, 2023, Mr. Freeman landed at least 40 fish, without keeping accounting records, in violation of Section 8050(c). (Exhibit 5.)
- On or about July 30, 2023, Mr. Freeman refused to provide any accounting records to Department Wardens, stating he did not maintain such records, in violation of Section 8050(c). (Exhibit 5.)

³ Section 11505(c) states in part: The accusation ... and all accompanying information may be sent to the respondent by any means selected by the agency, but no order adversely affecting the rights of the respondent shall be made by the agency in any case unless the respondent has been served personally or by registered mail as provided herein, or has filed a notice of defense Service may be proved in the manner authorized in civil actions. Service by registered mail shall be effective if a statute or agency rule requires the respondent to file the respondent’s address with the agency and to notify the agency of any change, and if a registered letter containing the accusation or District Statement of Reduction in Force and accompanying material is mailed, addressed to the respondent at the latest address on file with the agency.

⁴ Fish and Game Code section 13 provides: “Unless otherwise specified by statute, any notice or other written communication required to be sent to any person by this code or regulations adopted pursuant thereto, is sufficient notice if sent by first-class mail to the last address furnished to the department by that person.”

2021-2022 Sale of Fish Violations

Mr. Freeman first purchased a Commercial Fishing License on July 18, 2017. Between April 1, 2021, and May 9, 2022, when the below sales occurred, he did not have a valid Commercial Fishing License or Commercial Fish Receiver's License.

- On or about July 6, 2021, Mr. Freeman sold a fish to a restaurant for approximately \$1141, without first landing the fish as required by Section 8043(a)(2), in violation of Section 12012(a). (Exhibit 5.)
- On or about July 20, 2021, Mr. Freeman sold a fish to a restaurant for approximately \$2100, without first landing the fish as required by Section 8043(a)(2), in violation of Section 12012(a). (Exhibit 5.)
- On or about July 21, 2021, Mr. Freeman sold two fish to a restaurant for approximately \$490 and \$500, without first landing the fish as required by Section 8043(a)(2), in violation of Section 12012(a). (Exhibit 5.)
- On or about July 26, 2021, Mr. Freeman sold a fish to a restaurant for approximately \$1351, without first landing the fish as required by Section 8043(a)(2), in violation of Section 12012(a). (Exhibit 5.)
- On or about August 14, 2021, Mr. Freeman sold a fish to a restaurant for approximately \$1008, without first landing the fish as required by Section 8043(a)(2), in violation of Section 12012(a). (Exhibit 5.)
- On or about August 23, 2021, Mr. Freeman sold two fish to a restaurant for approximately \$500 and \$454, without first landing the fish as required by Section 8043(a)(2), in violation of Section 12012(a). (Exhibit 5.)
- On or about August 30, 2021, Mr. Freeman sold a fish to a restaurant for approximately \$1080, without first landing the fish as required by Section 8043(a)(2), in violation of Section 12012(a). (Exhibit 5.)
- On or about October 12, 2021, Mr. Freeman sold four fish to a restaurant for approximately \$500 each, without first landing the fish as required by Section 8043(a)(2), in violation of Section 12012(a). (Exhibit 5.)
- On or about May 4, 2022, Mr. Freeman sold a fish to a restaurant for approximately \$840, without first landing the fish as required by Section 8043(a)(2), in violation of Section 12012(a). (Exhibit 5.)

On or about February 15, 2024, in *People v. Chad Freeman*, San Diego County Superior Court case number CN452248, San Diego County District Attorney's Office filed a criminal complaint alleging a felony violation of Revenue and Tax (R&T) Code section 55363, misdemeanor violations of R&T Code section 6071, Health and Safety (H&S) Code section 11358(c), H&S Code section 11359(b), R&T Code section 6452(c), and five misdemeanor counts of Fish and Game Code section 12012(a). (Exhibit 6.)

On or about June 27, 2024, Mr. Freeman pled guilty to misdemeanor counts of R&T Code section 6071, H&S Code section 11358(c), and Fish and Game Code section 12012(a). Mr. Freeman was sentenced to 1 year summary probation and assessed a \$663 fine. (Exhibit 7.)

Conclusion

In sum, Mr. Freeman sold at least 10, but up to or more than 48, fish without landing them or involving them in the commercial fishing regulatory process in any way. Mr. Freeman caught many of these fish under the authority of a sport fishing license, intentionally failed to land them, and kept no records of the transactions. Department Wardens found 48 incidents of the sale of fish, which Mr. Freeman made approximately \$46,392 from. Between 2020 and 2022, there were likely many more sales than identified as Wardens found more than \$212,000 in untraceable deposits to Mr. Freeman's bank account.

Mr. Freeman was a previously licensed commercial fisherman who was responsible for knowing the legal methods of engaging in the sale of fish but intentionally did not follow any of these statutes and regulations for years. His sales were to various restaurants and fish receivers, who repeatedly looked the other way at the suspect lack of documentation and low prices.

Mr. Freeman should not be allowed to continue participating in California commercial fishing. He has demonstrated a complete lack of care for the resource and the public. The Department is requesting that the Commission permanently revoke Mr. Freeman's Commercial Fishing License and Commercial Fish Receiver's License.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact Staff Counsel Cooper Wilce by telephone number at (916) [REDACTED] or e-mail at [REDACTED]

Sincerely,

DocuSigned by:

[REDACTED]

AA968532644A4EB...
NATHANIEL ARNOLD
Chief, Law Enforcement Division

Cc: Chad Freeman

Exhibit 1

Accusation

COOPER WILCE (SBN 344611)
Staff Counsel
Department of Fish and Wildlife
P.O. Box 944209
Sacramento, CA 94244-2090
(916) 241-7894
e-mail: Cooper.Wilce@Wildlife.ca.gov
Attorney for Complainant

OFFICE OF ADMINISTRATIVE HEARINGS
BEFORE THE FISH AND GAME COMMISSION

In the Matter of the Accusation Against)
)
) ACCUSATION
)
CHAD FREEMAN,)
)
Respondent.)
)
)
)
)

PARTIES

1. Nathaniel Arnold ("Complainant") is the Chief of the Law Enforcement Division for the Department of Fish and Wildlife ("Department") and brings this Accusation solely in his official capacity.
2. On or about March 4, 2026, the Department renewed a Commercial Fishing License ("License") issued to Respondent, CHAD FREEMAN ("FREEMAN"). The License was first purchased by FREEMAN on or about July 18, 2017. FREEMAN did not have the License between on or about April 1, 2021 and May 9, 2022.
3. On or about April 15, 2025, the Department renewed a Commercial Fish Receiver's License ("Receiver's License") issued to Respondent, FREEMAN. The Receiver's License was first purchased on or about July 18, 2017. FREEMAN did

In the Matter of the Accusation Against Chad Freeman

not have the Receiver's License between on or about January 1, 2020 and June 22, 2022.

JURISDICTION

This Accusation is brought before the Fish and Game Commission ("Commission") under the authority of the following laws.

4. Fish and Game Code section 86 ("Section 86"), which states:

"Take" means hunt, pursue, catch, capture, or kill, or attempt to hunt, pursue, catch, capture, or kill.

5. Fish and Game Code section 7857(b)(2) ("Section 7857(b)(2)"), which states:

Unless otherwise specified, the following conditions apply to each commercial fishing license, permit, or other entitlement issued to take, possess aboard a boat, or land fish for commercial purposes and to each commercial boat registration issued by the department. ...

(b) The commission, after notice and opportunity for hearing, may suspend, revoke, or cancel commercial fishing privileges for a period of time to be determined by the commission for the following reasons:

...
(2) A violation of this code, the terms of the permit or other entitlement, or the regulations adopted pursuant thereto, by the licensee, permittee, person holding the entitlement, or his or her agent, servant, employee, or person acting under the licensee's, permittee's, or entitled person's direction or control.

6. Fish and Game Code section 8043 ("Section 8043"), which states in part:

(a) The following persons shall report all fish sales, deliveries, transfers, and landings using an electronic fish ticket as prescribed pursuant to regulations adopted by the commission:

(1) A person who is required to be licensed under Article 7 (commencing with Section 8030) to conduct the activities of a fish receiver, as described in Section 8033.

(2) A commercial fisher who sells, delivers, or transfers fish to a person who is not a fish receiver licensed under Article 7 (commencing with Section 8030).

(3) A commercial fisher who sells, delivers, or transfers live marine fish for use exclusively as live bait that are not brought ashore to a person who is not a fish receiver licensed under Article 7 (commencing with Section 8030).

(4) A person licensed under Article 7 (commencing with Section 8030) who brings ashore their own fish as described in Section 8033 or 8033.5.

(5) A commercial fisher licensed pursuant to Section 8033.5 who sells fish to persons not licensed to receive fish for commercial purposes pursuant to Article 7 (commencing with Section 8030).

...
(c) A person identified in paragraph (1), (2), or (3) of subdivision (a) shall complete the electronic fish ticket as prescribed by regulation at the time of receipt, purchase, or transfer of fish, whichever occurs first. A person identified in paragraph (4) of subdivision (a) shall complete the electronic fish ticket as prescribed by regulation at the time the fish are brought ashore. A person identified in paragraph (5) of subdivision (a) shall complete the electronic fish ticket either at the time of individual sale or at the completion of sales for the calendar day of sales pursuant to Section 8043.2.

(d) With the exception of live marine fish for use exclusively as bait that is not subsequently brought ashore or as otherwise prescribed by regulation, the receipt, purchase, or transfer of fish shall not occur at sea or from vessel to vessel.

(e) A person taking, purchasing, or receiving fish, whether or not licensed under Article 7 (commencing with Section 8030), shall sign the original paper hard copy of the electronic fish ticket as prescribed by regulation.

7. Fish and Game Code section 8046(a) ("Section 8046(a)"), which states:

(a) The electronic fish ticket made under Section 8043 shall be submitted to the department within three business days of the landing unless otherwise specified in regulations. The original signed copy of the paper landing receipt made under Section 8043.1 shall be delivered to the department on or before the 16th or last day of the month in which the fish were landed, whichever date occurs first after the landing. A copy of the electronic fish ticket or landing receipt shall be delivered to the commercial fisherman at the time of the purchase or receipt of the fish. That copy of the electronic fish ticket or landing receipt shall be retained by the commercial fisherman for a period of four years and shall be available for inspection at any time during that period by the department. A copy of the electronic fish ticket or landing receipt shall be kept by the person licensed pursuant to Article 7 (commencing with Section 8030), or live bait dealer registered with the department, who filled out the electronic fish ticket or landing receipt for a period of four years and shall be available for inspection at any time within that period by the department.

8. Fish and Game Code section 8050(a) ("Section 8050(a)"), which states:

(a) In addition to the receipt required by Section 8043, every person licensed under Article 7 (commencing with Section 8030), and any commercial fisherman who sells fish to persons who are not licensed under Article 7 (commencing with Section 8030), and any person who deals in fresh or frozen fish for profit, shall keep accounting records in which all of the following shall be recorded:

(c) The accounting records shall be maintained by both buyer and seller for a period of three years and upon request, shall be open for inspection during normal business hours by the department. The accounting records shall be maintained within the State of California.

9. Fish and Game Code section 12012(a) ("Section 12012(a)"), which states:

(a) A person who illegally takes, possesses, imports, exports, sells, purchases, barter, trades, or exchanges a bird, fish, mammal, reptile, amphibian, or part of any of those animals, for profit or personal gain, is guilty of a misdemeanor punishable by a fine of not less than five thousand dollars (\$5,000) nor more than forty thousand dollars (\$40,000), or imprisonment in the county jail for not more than one year, or by both that fine and imprisonment.

10. Fish and Game Code section 12158.5 ("Section 12158.5"), which states:

For the purpose of invoking any provision of this code, or any rule, regulation, or order made or adopted under this code, relating to the suspension, revocation, or forfeiture of any license or permit, a plea of nolo contendere or "no contest" to, or forfeiture of bail from, a charge of a violation of any provision of this code, or any rule, regulation, or order made or adopted under this code, is a conviction of a violation thereof.

11. California Code of Regulations, Title 14, section 1.14 ("Section 1.14"), which states:

Fish, amphibians, reptiles, mollusks and crustaceans may be taken only in the amounts, only during the open season and only with the gear authorized and shall not be taken otherwise.

12. California Code of Regulations, Title 14, section 197 ("Section 197"), which states in part,:

(a) Definitions. The following definitions apply to this section:

(1) "Commercial fisherman" has the same meaning as found in Fish and Game Code Section 8040.

(2) "Dock ticket" means written documentation that is legible and in English, for landing data as described in subsection (e)(3) of these regulations, and is used when submission of the electronic fish ticket cannot be performed immediately upon landing.

(3) "Electronic fish ticket" means a web-based form that is used to send landing data pursuant to Fish and Game Code Section 8043 to the department via the

Pacific States Marine Fisheries Commission. The web-based form is accessed at <https://etix.psmfc.org>.

(4) "Fish business" has the same meaning as found in Fish and Game Code Section 8032.

(5) "Fish receiver" has the same meaning as found in Fish and Game Code Section 8033.

(6) "Fish transportation receipt" means a paper form provided by the department for recording commercial catch that is transported from the point of first landing to a fish receiver.

(7) "Functional" means that the software and hardware requirements are met and submission to Pacific States Marine Fisheries Commission can be executed effectively by the equipment.

(8) "Land" or "Landing" means to begin transfer of fish, offloading fish, or to offload fish from any vessel. Once transfer of fish begins, all fish aboard the vessel are counted as part of the landing.

(9) "Landing receipt" means a paper form provided by the department for recording the sale or delivery of commercial catch.

(10) "Record" means the action of documenting electronic fish ticket information on a dock ticket.

(11) "Submit" means to transmit via a web-based form final electronic fish ticket information.

CONVICTION

13. On or about February 15, 2024, in *People v. Chad Freeman*, San Diego County Superior Court case number CN452248, San Diego County District Attorney's Office filed a criminal complaint alleging a felony violation of Revenue and Tax (R&T) Code section 55363, misdemeanor violations of R&T Code section 6071, Health and Safety (H&S) Code section 11358(c), H&S Code section 11359(b), R&T Code section 6452(c), and five misdemeanor counts of Fish and Game Code section 12012(a).
14. On or about June 27, 2024, Respondent FREEMAN pled guilty to misdemeanor counts of R&T Code section 6071, H&S Code section 11358(c), and Fish and Game Code section 12012(a). Respondent FREEMAN was sentenced to 1 year summary probation and assessed a \$663 fine.

**FIRST
CAUSE FOR DISCIPLINE**

15. Respondent FREEMAN is subject to disciplinary action under Section 7857(b)(2) in that he violated Section 12012(a), a violation for which the License and Receiver's License may be revoked. The circumstances are as follows:
 - a. On or about July 6, 2021, Respondent FREEMAN sold a fish to a restaurant for approximately \$1141, without first landing the fish as required by Section 8043(a)(2), in violation of Section 12012(a).
 - b. On or about June 27, 2024, Respondent FREEMAN pled guilty to Fish and Game Code section 12012(A).

///

///

///

**SECOND
CAUSE FOR DISCIPLINE**

16. Respondent FREEMAN is subject to disciplinary action under Section 7857(b)(2) in that he violated Section 12012(a), a violation for which the License and Receiver's License may be revoked. The circumstances are as follows:
- a. On or about July 20, 2021, Respondent FREEMAN sold a fish to a restaurant for approximately \$2100, without first landing the fish as required by Section 8043(a)(2), in violation of Section 12012(a).
 - b. On or about June 27, 2024, Respondent FREEMAN pled guilty to Fish and Game Code section 12012(A).

**THIRD
CAUSE FOR DISCIPLINE**

17. Respondent FREEMAN is subject to disciplinary action under Section 7857(b)(2) in that he violated Section 12012(a), a violation for which the License and Receiver's License may be revoked. The circumstances are as follows:
- a. On or about July 21, 2021, Respondent FREEMAN sold two fish to a restaurant for approximately \$490 and \$500, without first landing the fish as required by Section 8043(a)(2), in violation of Section 12012(a).
 - b. On or about June 27, 2024, Respondent FREEMAN pled guilty to Fish and Game Code section 12012(A).

**FOURTH
CAUSE FOR DISCIPLINE**

18. Respondent FREEMAN is subject to disciplinary action under Section 7857(b)(2) in that he violated Section 12012(a), a violation for which the License and Receiver's License may be revoked. The circumstances are as follows:

a. On or about July 26, 2021, Respondent FREEMAN sold a fish to a restaurant for approximately \$1351, without first landing the fish as required by Section 8043(a)(2), in violation of Section 12012(a).

b. On or about June 27, 2024, Respondent FREEMAN pled guilty to Fish and Game Code section 12012(A).

FIFTH CAUSE FOR DISCIPLINE

19. Respondent FREEMAN is subject to disciplinary action under Section 7857(b)(2) in that he violated Section 12012(a), a violation for which the License and Receiver's License may be revoked. The circumstances are as follows:

a. On or about August 14, 2021, Respondent FREEMAN sold a fish to a restaurant for approximately \$1008, without first landing the fish as required by Section 8043(a)(2), in violation of Section 12012(a).

b. On or about June 27, 2024, Respondent FREEMAN pled guilty to Fish and Game Code section 12012(A).

SIXTH CAUSE FOR DISCIPLINE

20. Respondent FREEMAN is subject to disciplinary action under Section 7857(b)(2) in that he violated Section 12012(a), a violation for which the License and Receiver's License may be revoked. The circumstances are as follows:

a. On or about August 23, 2021, Respondent FREEMAN sold two fish to a restaurant for approximately \$500 and \$454, without first landing the fish as required by Section 8043(a)(2), in violation of Section 12012(a).

b. On or about June 27, 2024, Respondent FREEMAN pled guilty to Fish and Game Code section 12012(A).

**SEVENTH
CAUSE FOR DISCIPLINE**

21. Respondent FREEMAN is subject to disciplinary action under Section 7857(b)(2) in that he violated Section 12012(a), a violation for which the License and Receiver's License may be revoked. The circumstances are as follows:
- a. On or about August 30, 2021, Respondent FREEMAN sold a fish to a restaurant for approximately \$1080, without first landing the fish as required by Section 8043(a)(2), in violation of Section 12012(a).
 - b. On or about June 27, 2024, Respondent FREEMAN pled guilty to Fish and Game Code section 12012(A).

**EIGHTH
CAUSE FOR DISCIPLINE**

22. Respondent FREEMAN is subject to disciplinary action under Section 7857(b)(2) in that he violated Section 12012(a), a violation for which the License and Receiver's License may be revoked. The circumstances are as follows:
- a. On or about October 12, 2021, Respondent FREEMAN sold four fish to a restaurant for approximately \$500 each, without first landing the fish as required by Section 8043(a)(2), in violation of Section 12012(a).
 - b. On or about June 27, 2024, Respondent FREEMAN pled guilty to Fish and Game Code section 12012(A).

**NINETH
CAUSE FOR DISCIPLINE**

23. Respondent FREEMAN is subject to disciplinary action under Section 7857(b)(2) in that he violated Section 12012(a), a violation for which the License and Receiver's License may be revoked. The circumstances are as follows:

a. On or about May 4, 2022, Respondent FREEMAN sold a fish to a restaurant for approximately \$840, without first landing the fish as required by Section 8043(a)(2), in violation of Section 12012(a).

b. On or about June 27, 2024, Respondent FREEMAN pled guilty to Fish and Game Code section 12012(A).

TENTH CAUSE FOR DISCIPLINE

24. Respondent FREEMAN is subject to disciplinary action under Section 7857(b)(2) in that he violated Section 8046(a), a violation for which the License and Receiver's License may be revoked. The circumstances are as follows:

a. Between on or about April 1, 2020 and January 19, 2023, Respondent FREEMAN landed at least 40 fish, without submitting a landing receipt documenting the take, in violation of Section 8046(a).

b. On or about July 30, 2023, Respondent FREEMAN refused to provide any landing receipts to Department Wardens, stating he did not maintain such records, in violation of Section 8046(a).

ELEVENTH CAUSE FOR DISCIPLINE

25. Respondent FREEMAN is subject to disciplinary action under Section 7857(b)(2) in that he violated Section 8050(c), a violation for which the License and Receiver's License may be revoked. The circumstances are as follows:

a. Between on or about April 1, 2020 and January 19, 2023, Respondent FREEMAN landed at least 40 fish, without keeping accounting records, in violation of Section 8050(c).

1 b. On or about July 30, 2023, Respondent FREEMAN refused to provide any
2 accounting records to Department Wardens, stating he did not maintain such
3 records, in violation of Section 8050(c).
4

5 **PRAYER**

6 WHEREFORE, Complainant prays that a hearing be held on the charges and that
7 thereafter the Fish and Game Commission issues a decision:

8 (1) Revoking FREEMAN's Commercial Fishing License and all other commercial fishing
9 privileges, including his privilege to obtain a Commercial Fishing License
10 permanently;

11 (2) Revoking FREEMAN's Commercial Fish Receiver's License and all other commercial
12 fish receiver privileges, including his privilege to obtain a Commercial Fish
13 Receiver's License permanently; and

14 (3) Taking such other and further action as may be deemed just and proper.
15
16

17 Dated this 20 day of August 2026
18

19 DocuSigned by:
20 
21 AA968532644A4EB...
22 NATHANIEL ARNOLD
23 COMPLAINANT
24 CHIEF, LAW ENFORCEMENT DIVISION
25

VERIFICATION

I, Nathaniel Arnold, the undersigned, say:

I am a party to this action; the above document is true of my own knowledge, except as to the matters that are stated on my information and belief, and as to those matters, I believe them to be true.

I declare under penalty of perjury that the above is true and correct and that this declaration was executed on August 20, 2026, at 715 P St., Sacramento, CA 95814.

Date: 8/20/2026

DocuSigned by:

AA968532644A4EB...

Nathaniel Arnold
Declarant

Exhibit 2

Proof of Service 1

Certified Mail

7021 1970 0002 0038 5623

1 *In the Matter of the Accusation Against CHAD FREEMAN*

2
3 **PROOF OF SERVICE**

4 I am a resident of the State of California, over the age of eighteen years, and not a party to
5 the within action. My business address is California Department of Fish and Wildlife, 715 P
6 Street, Sacramento, California 95814. On August 20, 2026, I served the within documents
described as:

- 7 **1. Accusation;**
8 **2. Notice of Defense (Under Govt. Code § 11506) (2 copies);**
9 **3. Statement to Respondent; and**
10 **4. California Government Code §§ 11507.5, 11507.6 and 11507.7 (2 copies).**

11 _____ (BY ELECTRONIC SERVICE) by transmitting via electronic service the documents listed
12 above to the e-mail address set forth below on this date at _____. The transmission was
13 reported as complete and without error.

14 X (BY CERTIFIED MAIL – RETURN RECIEPT REQUESTED) I am familiar with my
15 employer's collection and processing of correspondence for mailing with the United States
16 Postal Service and that each day mail is deposited with the United States Postal Service that
17 same day in the ordinary course of business. On the date set forth above, I served the
18 aforementioned documents on the party in said action by placing a true copy thereof
19 enclosed in a sealed envelope with postage thereon fully prepaid, for collection and mailing
20 on this date, following ordinary business practices in Sacramento, California addressed as
21 set forth below.

22 Chad Freeman
23 [REDACTED]
24 [REDACTED]

25 CERTIFIED MAIL NO.: 7021 1970 0002 0038 5623

26 I declare under penalty of perjury under the laws of the State of California that the foregoing
27 is true and correct. Executed on August 20, 2026, at Sacramento, California.

28
DocuSigned by:
[REDACTED]
9B06DA19D82146A...

Cooper Wilce

Exhibit 3

Proof of Service 2

Certified Mail

7021 1970 0002 0038 5661

1 *In the Matter of the Accusation Against CHAD FREEMAN*

2
3 **PROOF OF SERVICE**

4 I am a resident of the State of California, over the age of eighteen years, and not a party to
5 the within action. My business address is California Department of Fish and Wildlife, 715 P
6 Street, Sacramento, California 95814. On September 3, 2026, I served the within documents
described as:

- 7 **1. Accusation;**
8 **2. Notice of Defense (Under Govt. Code § 11506) (2 copies);**
9 **3. Statement to Respondent; and**
10 **4. California Government Code §§ 11507.5, 11507.6 and 11507.7 (2 copies).**

11 _____ (BY ELECTRONIC SERVICE) by transmitting via electronic service the documents listed
12 above to the e-mail address set forth below on this date at _____. The transmission was
13 reported as complete and without error.

14 X (BY CERTIFIED MAIL – RETURN RECIEPT REQUESTED) I am familiar with my
15 employer's collection and processing of correspondence for mailing with the United States
16 Postal Service and that each day mail is deposited with the United States Postal Service that
17 same day in the ordinary course of business. On the date set forth above, I served the
18 aforementioned documents on the party in said action by placing a true copy thereof
19 enclosed in a sealed envelope with postage thereon fully prepaid, for collection and mailing
20 on this date, following ordinary business practices in Sacramento, California addressed as
21 set forth below.

22 Chad Freeman
23 [REDACTED]
24 [REDACTED]

25 CERTIFIED MAIL NO.: 7021 1970 0002 0038 5661

26 I declare under penalty of perjury under the laws of the State of California that the foregoing
27 is true and correct. Executed on September 3, 2026, at Sacramento, California.

28 DocuSigned by:

9B06DA190B2146A...

Cooper Wilce

Exhibit 4

Screenshot of Delivery

Certified Mail

7021 1970 0002 0038 5661

Tracking Number:

70211970000200385661



Copy



Add to Informed Delivery

Latest Update

Your item was delivered to an individual at the address at 12:09 pm on September 11, 2026 in VALLEY CENTER, CA 92082.

Get More Out of USPS Tracking:



USPS Tracking Plus®



Delivered

Delivered, Left with Individual

VALLEY CENTER, CA 92082

September 11, 2026 12:09 PM

[See All Tracking History](#)

[What Do USPS Tracking Statuses Mean?](#)

Exhibit 5

Report

FW-2301-0145

Department of Fish and Wildlife		NOTICE TO APPEAR		☐ MISDEMEANOR ☒ Traffic ☒ Nontraffic		AD2 247434	
Date of Violation	Time	AM ☒ PM ☐	Day of Week	Case No.			
7 1 30 23	7:05		SUN	FW-2361-045			
Name (First, Middle, Last)		☐ Owner's Responsibility (Veh. Code, § 40001)					
CHAD FREEMAN							
Address							
[REDACTED]							
City	State/Country	ZIP Code	Phone #				
VALLEY CENTER	CA	92062	[REDACTED]				
Driver Lic. No.	State	Class	Commercial	Age	Birth Date		
[REDACTED]	CA	ID	☐ Yes ☒ No	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]		
Sex	Hair	Eyes	Height	Weight	Other Description		
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]		
Veh. Lic. No. or VIN	State	Reg. MO/YR	☐ COMMERCIAL VEHICLE (Veh. Code, § 15210(b)) ☐ HAZARDOUS MATERIAL (Veh. Code, § 353)				
Yr. of Veh.	Make	Model	Body Style	Color			
Evidence of Financial Responsibility							
Registered Owner or Lessee			☐ Same as Driver				
Address			☐ Same as Driver				
City			State ZIP Code				
Correctable Violation (Veh. Code, § 40610)			☐ Booking Required (see reverse)		Misdemeanor or Infraction (Circle)		
Yes	No	Code and Section	Description				
☐	☒	FB 12012(a)			M	I	
☐	☐	FG 9046(a)			M	I	
☐	☐	FG 9050(c)			M	I	
☐	☐	HS 11358(c)			M	I	
Speed Approx.	P.F./Max Spd.	Veh. Lmt.	GPS Lat.	Long			
Location of Violation(s)		City/County of Occurrence		Cal. ZIP No			
at 14555 COOL VALLEY		VALLEY CENTER					
Evidence Seized							
☐ Violations not committed in my presence, declared on information and belief. I declare under penalty of perjury under the laws of the State of California the foregoing is true and correct.							
Date	Arresting or Citing Officer		Badge No.				
1 / 1	S. M. 174		766				
Date	Name of Arresting Officer, if different from Citing Officer		Badge No.				
1 / 1							
WITHOUT ADMITTING GUILT, I PROMISE TO APPEAR AT THE TIME AND PLACE INDICATED BELOW.							
X Signature <u>FORMAL COMPLAINT</u>							
WHEN:	ON OR BEFORE THIS DATE: 1 / 1		Time: ☐ AM ☐ PM				
WHAT TO DO:	FOLLOW THE INSTRUCTIONS ON THE REVERSE.						
WHERE:	Name of Court:						
	Section or Division, Room No.: SD SUPERIOR						
	Street Address:						
	Phone Number: Court						
☐ To be notified ☐ You may arrange with the clerk to appear at a night session of the court.							
AD2 247434  *AD2247434* COURT COPY							
Judicial Council of California Form				SEE REVERSE			
Rev. 06-26-15 (Veh. Code, §§ 40500(b), 40513(b), 40522, 40600; Pen. Code, § 853.9)				TR-130			

Date/Time of Incident/Occurrence 07/31/2023 7:05		City/County/Judicial Jurisdiction VALLEY CENTER/SAN DIEGO/SAN DIEGO SUPERIOR	
Type of Arrest FORMAL COMPLAINT		Type of Contact SELF-INITIATED	RMS Case Number: FW-2301-0145
Type of Report CANNABIS, FISH & GAME CODE, COMMERCIAL FISHING			
Location/Subject/Incident Name UNLAWFUL SALES OF FISH & MARIJUANA			Arresting/Case Officer SMITH, AUSTIN T 0860

SUSPECT INFORMATION

Name Suspect (<i>First, Middle, Last</i>) CHAD FREEMAN	Involvement Type SUSPECT	Sex 	Date of Birth 	Citation Number FORMAL COMPLAINT
Suspect Address (<i>Street, Apt., City, State, Zip Code</i>) 				Home Phone
Identification Type DL: CA	Suspect Description			
	General: Height: Weight: LBS	Hair: 	Eyes: 	Race:

OFFENSES AND CHARGES

12012(a) FGC ILLEGAL TAKE OF FISH FOR PROFIT (17 Counts)
8046(a) FGC RECEIPTS PER 8043 OR 8043.1, FAIL TO SUBMISSION/RETENTION (53 counts)
8050(c) FGC COMMERCIAL RECORDS FROM BUYER & SELLER MAINTAINED FOR 3 YEARS AND AVAILABLE FOR INSPECTION (48 counts)
11358(C) HS CULTIVATE MARIJ 6+ PLANTS
11358(d)(3)(B) HS CULT MARIJUANA WITH VIOLATION OF WATER CODE SECTION(S) 13260, 13264, 13272 OR 13387
11359 HS POSS MARIJUANA FOR SALE
17206 BP ENGAGE IN UNFAIR BUSINESS PRACTICES

VEHICLE INFORMATION

Status: NOT SEIZED	Evidence Photographed? YES
Description: VESSEL REEL DEAL USCG 1024732	
Status: NOT SEIZED	Evidence Photographed? YES
Description: FORD F150 RAPTOR	

WITNESS INFORMATION

Witness Name (First, Middle, Last) [REDACTED]	Involvement Type SUSPECT	Sex [REDACTED]	Date of Birth [REDACTED]	Identification Number DL: CA [REDACTED]
Witness Address (Street, Apt., City, State, Zip Code) [REDACTED]				Home Phone [REDACTED]
Witness Name (First, Middle, Last) [REDACTED]	Involvement Type WITNESS	Sex [REDACTED]	Date of Birth [REDACTED]	Identification Number DL: CA [REDACTED]
Preparer's Name and Badge Number SMITH, AUSTIN T 0860	Date 1/11/2023	Reviewer's Name VUICH, TRAVIS R 0617		Date 9/6/2023



Date/Time of Incident/Occurrence 07/31/2023 7:05		City/County/Judicial Jurisdiction VALLEY CENTER/SAN DIEGO/SAN DIEGO SUPERIOR			
Type of Arrest FORMAL COMPLAINT		Type of Contact SELF-INITIATED		RMS Case Number: FW-2301-0145	
Type of Report CANNABIS, FISH & GAME CODE, COMMERCIAL FISHING					
Location/Subject/Incident Name UNLAWFUL SALES OF FISH & MARIJUANA				Arresting/Case Officer SMITH, AUSTIN T 0860	
Witness Address (Street, Apt., City, State, Zip Code) [REDACTED]					Home Phone [REDACTED]
Witness Name (First, Middle, Last) [REDACTED]		Involvement Type WITNESS	Sex [REDACTED]	Date of Birth [REDACTED]	Identification Number DL: CA [REDACTED]
Witness Address (Street, Apt., City, State, Zip Code) [REDACTED]					Home Phone [REDACTED]
Witness Name (First, Middle, Last) [REDACTED]		Involvement Type SUSPECT	Sex [REDACTED]	Date of Birth [REDACTED]	Identification Number DL: CA [REDACTED]
Witness Address (Street, Apt., City, State, Zip Code) [REDACTED]					Home Phone [REDACTED]
Witness Name (First, Middle, Last) [REDACTED]		Involvement Type SUSPECT	Sex [REDACTED]	Date of Birth [REDACTED]	Identification Number DL: CA [REDACTED]
Witness Address (Street, Apt., City, State, Zip Code) [REDACTED]					Home Phone [REDACTED]
Witness Name (First, Middle, Last) [REDACTED]		Involvement Type SUSPECT	Sex [REDACTED]	Date of Birth [REDACTED]	Identification Number DL: CA [REDACTED]
Witness Address (Street, Apt., City, State, Zip Code) [REDACTED]					Home Phone [REDACTED]

PROPERTY/EVIDENCE

Status: DESTROYED Description: 388.4 LBS OF PROCESSED MARIJUANA	Evidence Photographed? YES
Status: DESTROYED Description: 407 LIVE MARIJUANA PLANTS	Evidence Photographed? YES
Status: DESTROYED Description: 505 INDIVIDUAL CANNABIS/THC PRODUCTS (WAX, SALVE, VAPE PENS, ETC.)	Evidence Photographed? YES
Status: HELD Description: FARMER'S INSURANCE MAIL	Evidence Photographed? YES

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Status: HELD Description: 1500-1L BOTANICAL OIL EXTRACTION SYSTEM OWNER'S MANUAL			Evidence Photographed? YES
Status: HELD Description: WD MY PASSPORT HARDDRIVE			Evidence Photographed? YES
Status: HELD Description: CEN-TECH SCALE (CAPACITY 70LBS)			Evidence Photographed? YES
Status: HELD Description: AUTO INSURANCE DOCUMENTS			Evidence Photographed? YES
Status: HELD Description: DMV & INSURANCE DOCUMENTS			Evidence Photographed? YES
Status: HELD Description: \$3746 CASH (30X\$100, 12X\$50, 5X\$20, 5X\$5, 21X\$1)			Evidence Photographed? YES
Status: HELD Description: TURQUOISE PLANNER			Evidence Photographed? YES

NARRATIVE

Background

This investigation involves commercial fishing violations, which are often uncommon to the judicial system. The following is a brief summary of a few pertinent commercial fishing laws and regulations to help comprehend this report.

Every person taking or assisting in the take of commercial fish is required to have a valid commercial fishing license, FG § 7850. Every vessel used to take commercial fish is required to have a valid commercial vessel registration, FG § 7881.

Except as otherwise provided in the Fish and Game Code, it is unlawful to sell or purchase any fish or amphibia taken in, or brought into, the waters of the state, or brought ashore at any point in the state, FGC § 7121.

It is unlawful to buy, sell, or possess in any place of business where fish are bought, sold, or processed, any fish taken on any boat, barge, or vessel which carries sport fishermen, except those fish may be possessed in such a place only for the purposes of canning or smoking under regulations adopted by the commission, FG § 7121.

Similarly, a person who illegally takes, possesses, imports, exports, sells, purchases, barter, trades, or exchanges a

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bird, fish, mammal, reptile, amphibian, or part of any of those animals, for profit or personal gain, is guilty of a misdemeanor punishable by a fine of not less than five thousand dollars (\$5,000) nor more than forty thousand dollars (\$40,000), or imprisonment in the county jail for not more than one year, or by both that fine and imprisonment. Notwithstanding Section 802 of the Penal Code, prosecution of an offense punishable under this section shall be commenced within three years after commission of the offense, FG § 12012.

Any person who purchases or receives fish for commercial purposes from a fisherman who is required to be licensed under FG § 7850 (commercial fishing license), or any person who removes fish from the point of first landing that the person has caught for his or her own processing or sale, shall obtain a fish receiver's license, FG § 8033(a).

Commercial fish are required to be weighed on a county certified scale and accurately documented on a marine landing receipt (electronic fish ticket or written dock ticket) at the time of receipt, purchase, or transfer (from the vessel) of fish, whichever comes first, FG § 8043(a) and CCR T14 § 197(e)(3). This is referred to as landing the fish. At the time of the landing, the fish receiver shall either immediately complete an electronic fish ticket or record on a dock ticket the information that will be used to complete the marine landing receipt for submission pursuant to Fish and Game Code § 8046. This generally occurs at a commercial dock or a launch ramp at the time the fish are coming ashore. Once transfer of fish begins, all fish aboard the vessel are counted as part of the landing.

After review, the fish receiver and the commercial fisherman or the person who transported the fish shall sign a printed hard copy of the marine landing receipt documenting that both have verified the accuracy of the information contained therein.

If the fish receiver cannot meet the commercial fisherman at the place of first landing, a commercial fisherman or his designee shall fill out a fish transportation receipt to transport the fish to the licensed fish receiver, unless the fisherman is licensed as a fish receiver or acting under the authority of a fisherman's retail license, CCR T14 § 197(c)(2).

Marine landing receipts are required to be submitted to the Department within three days of the landing, except when landing bluefin tuna or sablefish, which are required to be submitted within 24 hours.

In addition to the marine landing receipt, every fish receiver, and any commercial fisherman who sells fish to persons who are not licensed under Article 7 (commencing with FG § 8030), and any person who deals in fresh or frozen fish for profit, shall keep accounting records in which all of the following shall be recorded: the number of pounds sold, distributed, or taken of each different species, the name of the person to whom the fish were sold or distributed, the name, address, and phone number of the seller or distributor, the date of sale, the price paid, and the intended use, FG § 8050.

These accounting records are essential for commercial fish to be "traceable." For example, these records allow enforcement to inspect a restaurant that sells local fish to customers and determine if those fish came from a legal source, such as a licensed fish receiver.

Failure to accurately document the landing and sale of commercial fish undermines the legal commercial market, the livelihood of lawful commercial fisherman and impedes State and Federal biologists' management of these natural resources.

Narrative

In early 2022, an investigation began on Tanner Whitmarsh, a commercial fisherman from San Diego County. As part of the investigation, I authored search warrant #2204011434-OTH-MDK-SW (signed 4/1/2022) to obtain Whitmarsh's Apple iCloud account records. During the review of the records, I found Whitmarsh exchanged text messages with Chad Freeman.

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Upon reviewing the text messages, I found Freeman messaged Whitmarsh on August 21, 2021, and told him he had caught "18 cows" (common fishermen slang referring to large bluefin tuna). Freeman wrote, "Might need a little help. Dude. I could make 50 grand real quick if this shit keeps biting." Tanner asked how he could help, and Freeman responded, "Selling."

This conversation led me to believe Freeman was not a licensed commercial fisherman. I then conducted a search of CDFW's Automated License System (ALDS) and found Freeman was not a commercially licensed fishermen during that time. Additionally, the sport fishing limit for bluefin tuna is two per person. The unlawful sale of sport-caught fish is a violation of FG § 7121 and § 12012(a). FG § 12012(a) has a three-year statute of limitations (§ 12012(d)) and carries a minimum \$5,000 fine and a maximum \$40,000 fine.

On June 11, 2022, CDFW wardens served a search warrant at the Whitmarsh residence. During the service, Whitmarsh was interviewed and explained to me he often saw Freeman catch large quantities of bluefin tuna. He further explained Freeman often sells to sushi restaurants in northern San Diego County, including Samurai Japanese Restaurant in Solana Beach, CA.

On August 22, 2022, I served Samurai Japanese Restaurant a notice to provide invoices for all fish purchased from fishermen since January 1, 2020, pursuant to FG § 8050. Samurai Japanese Restaurant did not retain invoices as required and instead provided me their business bank statements. Within the bank statements were photocopies of checks written by the restaurant, including five checks issued to Freeman from June 6, 2020 to August 30, 2021 totaling \$7,849. Three of the checks contained memos stating "tuna 350lbs x 8.00," "193lbs x 7.00 = \$1351.00," and "180.0lbs x \$6.00 = \$1080.00." Please see attachments 1.1 for the emails from Samurai Japanese Restaurant.

Three of the checks were issued in 2020 when Freeman was a licensed commercial fisherman (commercially licensed from April 16, 2020 – March 31, 2021). However, Freeman nor Samurai Japanese Restaurant held a receiver's license, which at least one party is required to hold pursuant to FG § 8033(a). Moreover, the landing and sale of these fish were left undocumented as no landing receipt was submitted to CDFW, a violation of FG § 8046(a). The other two checks from Samurai Japanese Restaurant were written to Freeman on July 26, 2021 and August 30, 2021. At that time, Freeman did not hold a commercial fishing license, a violation of FG § 12012(a).

Upon reviewing the bank statements, I emailed the owner of Samurai Japanese Restaurant, Charlie Song, and asked him what he purchased from Freeman. Song responded, "Tuna."

Commercial fishing for certain species is regulated on both the state and federal level. National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) regulates highly migratory species (HMS), which includes bluefin tuna. NOAA requires commercial fishermen, when targeting such species, to hold a Pacific HMS permit and record and submit fishing activity logbooks. In consulting with NOAA personnel, I found Freeman has never held a Pacific HMS permit, a violation of 50 CFR § 660.707(a)(1).

After concluding the investigation on Whitmarsh and his coconspirators, I authored a search warrant for Freeman's Apple iCloud account records. On January 10, 2023, the honorable Judge Patricia Cookson of the San Diego Superior Court signed warrant #2301101632-OTH-PKC-SW authorizing the search of Freeman's Apple iCloud account records regarding natural resource crimes from April 1, 2020 through January 10, 2023.

On January 22, 2023, Apple Inc. provided me the requested data associated with Freeman's account by supplying a hyperlink of downloadable content, this included photographs, videos, and iCloud backups. The iCloud backups were processed through the software program Cellebrite, which produced text messages from Freeman's account. I then organized the data into the appropriate timeline and began to analyze the data. Later, images were also obtained from the iCloud backups using the program Magnet Axiom.

In reviewing the text messages on Freeman's iCloud account, I found several other individuals were involved in unlawful

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fish activity. I verified their identify by searching their phone numbers listed in the text messages through TLOxp (law enforcement database system) and ALDS. I then compared those results with the contact stored in the iCloud account.

A preliminary review of the records strongly supported Freeman held a Chase Bank account and also utilized Venmo and PayPal to accept payment for his fish sales. I then prepared search warrants for all three companies.

On February 3, 2023, search warrant #2302031154-OTH-JMB-SW was signed by the honorable Judge Jay Bloom of the San Diego Superior Court authorizing the search of Freeman's Chase Bank records from April 1, 2020 through February 3, 2023. On February 14, 2023, J.P. Morgan Chase Bank provided me with an email and hyperlink to their Secure Content Delivery Portal that was protected by a secure login. Freeman's bank records were then downloaded from the portal in a single PDF file.

On February 10, 2023, search warrants #2302210859-OTH-MOM-SW and #2302210854-OTH-AJC-SW were signed by Judges McLaughlin and Campagna of the San Diego Superior Court, authorizing the search of Freeman's Venmo and PayPal account records from April 1, 2020 through February 10, 2023. Venmo records were emailed to me in a password protected zip folder, and a separate email with a password was provided. The PayPal records were downloaded from the PayPal Safety Hub Law Enforcement Portal with from a secure login.

Relevant Facts and Knowledge of the Investigation

Before explaining the evidence uncovered from the review of the records, there are relevant facts the reader should know first.

ALDS records show Freeman held a commercial fishing license during the following commercial fishing seasons (commercial licensing is from April 1 – March 31):

1. 2020 Season: Licensed 4/16/2020 – 3/31/2021.
2. 2021 Season: Not licensed.
3. 2022 Season: Licensed 5/10/2022 – 3/31/2023.

Therefore, from April 1, 2021 – May 9, 2022, Freeman was not authorized to commercially fish or sell fish. See attachment 2.1 for Freeman's ALDS license history.

Review of the text messages from Freeman's iCloud account revealed Freeman became aware of the Whitmarsh investigation just after the search warrant on the Whitmarsh residence that was served on June 11, 2022, and he knew wardens had also visited Samurai Japanese Restaurant, one of Freeman's primary customers. Freeman wrote to a friend, "...They were asking them all kinds of questions. My guy didn't tell them shit. So he says. Lol I heard the DFG is doing a sting on illegal BFT sales this season..."

On June 14, 2022, Freeman warned two of his customers (Ryan Ashton and Michael Haig) of CDFW's investigation. Freeman wrote to both customers, "Hey. When you get a chance give me a call. I wanted to fill you in on BFT regulations. I heard the DFG is doing a massive investigation on illegal fish being sold."

On June 17, 2022, Freeman sent text messages to several friends he occasionally took fishing onboard his commercial trips, though they were not licensed to fish commercially. Freeman wrote, "Go on the DFG website and buy your commercial fishing license. DFG is cracking down."

On June 22, 2022, Freeman purchased a receiver's license from CDFW, enabling him to sell directly to restaurants. He then notified four of his customers that he would be able to provide "dock tickets" from now on.

I believe the messages and actions by Freeman provides strong evidence that he had the intent and knowledge of the crimes he committed.

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SUMMARY OF FISHING VIOLATIONS

1. **The Sale of Mexican Sport Caught Bluefin Tuna** – 16 U.S. Code § 3372 (felony), FG § 12012(a)
(Past statute of limitations – FG § 7121, §2353(a)(1), § 8033(a), § 8046(a))

From my analysis of Freeman's iCloud records, I know the photographs captured by Freeman's cell phone and uploaded to his iCloud account did not have location data or place of capture associated with them. However, it appears that Freeman saved some photographs to his account captured by others that did have location data.

Within Freeman's iCloud photographs, there are approximately 21 photographs and 1 video that document a fishing trip on June 4 and June 5 of 2020 onboard Freeman's vessel, the *Reel Deal*. These specific photographs contain location data placing them far into Mexican waters (e.g., 32° 15' 16.529", -117° 30' 26.890" and 32° 18' 19.770", -117° 32' 46.909"). The photographs are of numerous large bluefin tuna on the deck of the boat, bluefin tuna hanging from the side of the boat, and an unknown man fishing and posing with a bluefin tuna. The sole video is of Freeman actively fighting a fish on rod and reel. Please see attachment folder 3.1 for the mentioned photographs and videos.

I know from reading Freeman's text message conversations that Freeman often slept onboard the 48ft *Reel Deal* overnight and while at sea. Knowing this and the similar location of the photographs captured on both days, I believe it was a multiday fishing trip. Unfortunately, no text messages are available from Freeman's iCloud records for this timeframe.

In reviewing Freeman's Chase Bank records, I found Freeman received a check from Samurai Japanese Restaurant for \$1,200.00 (memo line was left blank) on June 6, 2020 – the very next day after the fishing trip in Mexican waters. This restaurant is known to be a customer of Freeman's by statements from the owner of the restaurant, text messages, other check memos documenting the purchase of bluefin tuna, and the frequency of checks written to Freeman.

I know from my training and experience it is extremely common for commercial bluefin fishermen to sell their catch as soon as possible to preserve the quality of the fish. I also know from reviewing text messages in Freeman's account that he tried to sell fish as soon as he could upon returning from fishing trips. I know Freeman often had trouble storing such large fish for more than a day or two and/or keeping an adequate supply of ice on the fish.

I also know from reading Freeman's text messages and reviewing check memos, Freeman often received \$6/lb. before the sharp rise of inflation. For example, on September 17, 2020, Freeman received a Venmo payment with the memo "70lb + 119lb + 128lb = 317lb @ \$6lb = \$1904." Therefore, I believe likely Freeman sold Samurai Japanese Restaurant 200lbs of bluefin tuna at \$6/lb. for a total of \$1,200.00.

Freeman does not hold a Mexican commercial fishing license as they are only issued to Mexican nationals (General Law on Sustainable Fishing and Aquaculture, Article 63). Catching fish in Mexican waters for commercial purposes, importing it into the state of California, and selling the fish is a felony under the federal Lacey Act (16 U.S. Code 3372). Additionally, the unlawful importation of fish into the state is a violation of FG § 2353(a)(1), the unlawful sale of fish in the state is a violation FG § 7121 and § 12012(a), selling to a restaurant without a receiver's license is a violation of FG § 8033(a), and failing to submit a landing receipt to CDFW is a violation of FG § 8046(a).

Not only does the evidence listed above strongly support Freeman sold Mexican caught bluefin tuna, but Freeman openly admitted to the crime in a text message on May 9, 2022. Phone number [REDACTED] messaged Freeman, "Yo what up it's Eddie. Just curious why you don't go after the tuna that are south[?]" Freeman responded, "We have been. It's illegal to sell Mex caught BFT and everyone knows what we're doing. It's not worth it. To many haters and Fuk the DFG." (BFT = bluefin tuna, DFG = Department of Fish & Game).

1. **Sale of Sport Caught Bluefin Tuna** – 16 counts of FG § 12012(a)
(past statute of limitations – FG § 8033(a), § 7850(a), § 7121, §7880(a))

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As mentioned earlier in this report, Freeman did not hold a commercial fishing license in the 2021 season and through May 9, 2022, a violation of FG § 7850(a). In addition, his boat, the *Reel Deal*, was not commercially registered with CDFW in 2021 but had been in previous years, according to ALDS records, a violation of FG § 7880(a).

Freeman's failure to procure the necessary licenses was not an oversight. During the 2021 season, Freeman made incriminating statements showing knowledge that he was improperly licensed. This is documented further below.

The following are events documenting Freeman's sale of sport caught bluefin tuna from his Chase bank, Venmo, and PayPal records, violations of FG § 7121 and § 12012(a). All fish were sold without a receiver's license and no landing receipts were submitted to CDFW, unless otherwise documented – violations of FG § 8033(a) and § 8046(a):

July 6, 2021

Freeman received a check from "Haig Oceanside, Inc. DBA Harney Sushi Oceanside" for \$1,141.00 with the memo "Fish 163." Text messages support this transaction.

July 12, 2021

Freeman received a check from "Haig Oceanside, Inc. DBA Harney Sushi Oceanside" for \$1,300.00 with the memo "Fish 186."

July 20, 2021

Freeman received a check from "Haig Oceanside, Inc. DBA Harney Sushi Oceanside" for \$2100.00 with the memo "Fish." Text messages and photographs support this transaction.

Additionally, text messages and photographs also strongly suggest that Joshua Kirk (CDL [REDACTED]), Sean Murphy (CDL [REDACTED]), and Richard Norwood [REDACTED], and a fourth man were fishing on the multiday fishing trip with Freeman on July 18-19 of 2021. All three identified men did not hold a commercial fishing license at that time. Freeman bragged in a text message they caught 2000lbs of tuna. See attachment folder 4.1 for media of the fishing trip.

Approximately a year later, Freeman became aware of the Whitmarsh investigation and told several people, including Kirk, to buy a commercial fishing license – showing Freeman had knowledge that Kirk was not a licensed commercial fisherman. There is no evidence to suggest Freeman paid any of the four men for their efforts.

July 21, 2021

Freeman received two Venmo payments from Ryan Ashton for \$500.00 and \$490.00 with the memos "Thanks!" and "Fresh....", respectively. Ashton owns Kai Ola Sushi at 918 N Coast Hwy 101 #2049, Encinitas, CA 92024. Text messages and photographs support these transactions. Evidence supports the fish sold to Ashton were caught on the July 18-19 fishing trip mentioned above. Please see attachment folder 4.1 for media related to the fishing trip.

July 26, 2021

Freeman received a check from Samurai Japanese Restaurant for \$1351.00 with the memo "193lbs x 7.00 = \$1351." Text messages with the owner's son, Eric Song, revealed Freeman sold Song fish from his July 18-19 fishing trip and picked up a check approximately a week later (attachment 4.1).

July 27, 2021

Freeman received two Venmo payments from Christopher Manning for \$400.00 and \$350.00 with the memo "Flyers." "Flyers" commonly refers to flying fish, a common bluefin tuna bait. On the July 18-19, 2021 fishing trip, a video was captured, presumably by Freeman, of four men onboard his boat netting flying fish (attachment 4.1).

On July 20, 2021, a picture of individually wrapped flying fish contained in a resealable plastic bag was found on Freeman's iCloud account. While there are no text messages with Manning prior to 2022 in Freeman's account, Freeman solicited flying fish to his contact "Casey fisherman" on July 21, 2021 for \$100 for five to six flying fish.

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August 19, 2021

Freeman received a check from "Haig Oceanside, Inc. DBA Harney Sushi Oceanside" for \$1,008.00 with no memo recorded on the check. Text messages with Michael Haig support this transaction. Additionally, a photograph of Freeman fighting a fish on rod and reel was captured on August 18, 2021 (attachment 4.2).

August 19, 2021

Freeman solicited three fish weighing approximately 550lbs to Tanner Saraspe of Saraspe Seafoods (a licensed fish business). Saraspe agreed to buy the fish and arranged to meet at 1000 hours at Freeman's boat the following day.

On August 20, 2021, Saraspe messaged Freeman that she had arrived (presumably at the dock of Freeman's boat). Approximately 45 minutes later, Saraspe messaged Freeman that her employee (CJ) was headed down to him to drop off \$400 cash and said she would "take care of the rest" once she weighed the other fish. She further stated, "I only had 400 on me."

No landing receipt for bluefin tuna was submitted under Saraspe's Seafood business license number during that timeframe. Additionally, there is no record of a monetary transaction between Freeman and Saraspe – suggesting the entire transaction was by cash. See attachment 4.2 for media related to the fishing trip.

August 21, 2021

Freeman, Christopher Culver (CDL: [REDACTED], and several Idaho residents went on a fishing trip from August 20-21, 2021. At that time, Culver was a licensed commercial fisherman. Note: I know from reading text messages in Culver's iCloud account (obtained on 4/4/2023 warrant #2304041200-OTH-TZW-SW), that Culver and Freeman took five Idaho residents on the fishing trip. One Idaho resident was a friend of Culver's.

Upon returning from the fishing trip, Freeman bragged in several text messages about catching 18 bluefin over 200lbs and two bluefin around 120lbs, totaling approximately 4000lbs of fish. He also wrote that "it's really easy to make 6 digits in a season." The bag limit of bluefin tuna per sport fisherman is two. Additionally, Freeman bragged to his contact, Matt Johnson, that Culver shot several fish. The use of a speargun to take bluefin tuna is not a legal method of take for commercial purposes, a violation of 50 CFR § 600.725(v). On August 22, 2021, a photograph was captured of a pickup truck hooked up to a U-Haul trailer filled with large kill bags (insulated bags used to store fish).

Freeman and Culver then exchanged text messages on how they would sell such a large quantity of fish over several days. Freeman solicited fish to Tanner Renee Saraspe of Saraspe Seafoods and several other people. When exchanging messages with Saraspe, Saraspe asked if Freeman or Culver was selling the fish. Freeman responded, "Culver's got the paperwork. It's a joint effort" – paperwork meaning commercial licensing.

A search of MLDS shows Culver sold 525lbs to San Diego Seafood for \$2,620.00 on August 23, 2021 and 1,432lbs to Saraspe Seafood on August 25, 2021 for \$5,728.00 as documented by marine landing receipts.

A day after Culver and Freeman agreed to sell Saraspe fish at a lower price, Culver wrote, "\$10,781.00 boom." On August 27, 2021, Culver asked Freeman for his Venmo username and told him it only allows him to send \$2,500 per week. Venmo records reflect Culver paid Freeman \$2,500 on August 27, 2021, \$2,500 on September 3, 2021, and \$390 on September 24, 2021 – totaling \$5,390 or half of \$10,781.00.

While the two landing receipts do not add up to \$10,781.00, I know from my investigation that Culver frequently sold fish to restaurants without a receiver's licenses – similar to Freeman. Therefore, it is extremely likely that the remaining unaccounted balance came from undocumented sales to restaurants.

See folder attachment 4.3 for media related to the fishing trip.

August 23, 2021

Freeman received two Venmo payments from Ryan Ashton for \$500.00 and \$454.00 with the memo "Supplies." Text

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messages support these transactions. These fish were purchased from the August 21 trip (attachment 4.3).

August 30, 2021

Freeman received a check from Samurai Japanese Restaurant for \$1,080.00 with the memo "180lbs x \$6.00 = \$1080." Text messages with Eric Song support the fish was sold on August 23, 2021 and the check was later mailed to Freeman (attachment 4.3).

September 9, 2021

Freeman received a check from "Warman Holdings LLC dba Valentina" for \$1,316.00 with the memo "188#." Valentina is a restaurant in Encinitas, CA. Culver mentioned Valentina in several text messages as a bluefin buyer.

September 9, 2021

Freeman messaged with Tanner Saraspe of Saraspe Seafoods on September 8, and agreed to sell her two bluefin tuna around 180lbs each. Saraspe asked Freeman to bring landing information and asked if he fished with Culver (a licensed commercial fisherman), which Freeman confirmed. However, text messages strongly support Freeman was not fishing with Culver. Freeman, Saraspe, and Saraspe's employee "CJ" met around 1000 hours in Oceanside to make the transaction.

No landing receipt for bluefin tuna was submitted under Saraspe's Seafood business license number during that timeframe. Additionally, there is no record of a monetary transaction between Freeman and Saraspe. Therefore, it is likely Saraspe again paid Freeman cash.

September 12, 2021

Freeman received a PayPal payment from Michael Haig of Harney Sushi in Oceanside for \$1,080.00. Text messages support this transaction.

October 12, 2021

Freeman received four Venmo payments from Ryan Ashton for \$500.00 each with the memos "[fish emoticon]," "Bluefin," "Cows [bull emoticon]," and "Twins." Ashton told Freeman he had hit his weekly limit on Venmo and told him he owed him \$196. On October 19, 2021, a fifth payment was sent to Freeman for \$196.00 with the memo "Fish." Text messages support the payment was for two fish weighing 183lbs each that Freeman dropped off on September 10, 2021.

May 1, 2022

Freeman messaged Culver and asked if he knew anyone that needed fish. Culver recommended three restaurants, two of which Freeman does not typically sell to. Freeman responded, "I've got no paperwork." Culver wrote, "None of them give a shit lol." Freeman wrote, "Perfect," and Culver responded, "That's how you know we're giving them too good of a deal!" This conversation provides strong evidence Freeman knew he was selling sport caught fish.

May 8, 2022

Freeman received a PayPal payment from Michael Haig of Harney Sushi in Oceanside for \$1,183.00. Text messages support Freeman delivered the fish on May 1, 2022.

May 30, 2022

Freeman received a Venmo payment from Colin Whitbread for \$1,000. Text messages reveal Freeman solicited to sell the fish on May 7, 2022 and delivered it the next day. See attachment folder 4.4 for media related to the fishing trip on May 7, 2022.

The total amount from the transactions above is \$24,839.00.

1. **Failure to Land Fish and Sell to Restaurants without a Receiver's License** – 48 counts of FG § 8046(a) (past statute of limitations 45 counts of FG § 8033(a))

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My investigation revealed Freeman commonly sold bluefin tuna to local restaurants without a receiver's license and failed to document all landings when selling to restaurants, violations of FG § 8033(a), § 8043(a), and § 8046(a).

A search of MLDS from the timeline concurrent with the search warrants (04/01/2020 through 04/01/2023) revealed six landings in 2020 and three landings in 2022. These landings were documented by licensed fish receivers.

According to ALDS records, Freeman held a receiver's license from 2017-2019. During that timeframe, he never submitted a landing receipt to CDFW. He did not hold a receiver's license again until June 22, 2022, *after* he became aware of the Whitmarsh investigation, as documented above. Even after purchasing a receiver's license in 2022, Freeman still failed to submit landings to CDFW when he sold directly to restaurants. A search of MLDS in June 2023 with Freeman's receiver's license number yielded zero results.

On June 22, 2022, he wrote in separate text messages to four of his buyers, including Colin Whitbread, Ryan Ashton, Eric Song, and Michael Haig, and said, "We're all good. Going fishing this weekend. I'll be able to provide dock tickets." This further demonstrates that Freeman knew he was supposed to complete marine landing receipts but failed to do so.

The failure to land and document fish undermines the commercial fishery and leaves thousands of pounds of fish unaccounted for. This results in inaccurate harvest rates and mismanagement of the exhaustible resource. Furthermore, a rate of 0.0077 per pound of bluefin landed is charged quarterly to the receiver. Failure to land fish bypasses this fee.

After reviewing Chase, Venmo, and PayPal records, I compiled a spreadsheet of deposits that may be related to the sale of fish. From April 1, 2020 through January 19, 2023, there were 132 deposits totaling \$212,144.48, including \$119,476.00 in cash. However, only 48 deposits (in check, PayPal, or Venmo) can be identified with extreme confidence that support the sale of fish without documentation on a marine landing receipt and 45 deposits of operating without a receiver's license. Please see attachment 4.5 for complete details including date, amount, purchaser, memo, associated restaurant, and platform.

- 2020: 24 transactions, \$23,705.48
- 2021: 19 transactions, \$15,266.00
- 2022: 5 transactions, \$7,421.00
- Total: 48 transactions, \$46,392.48

Primary buyers include:

- Samurai Japanese Restaurant
- Michael Haig (Harney Sushi – Oceanside)
- Ryan Ashton (Should Been There LLC/Kai Ola Sushi)
- Tanner Saraspe (Saraspe Seafoods – licensed fish receiver)
- Colin Whitbread (Fiish LLC)

One-time or Seldom buyers include:

- Elias Btsh
- CH Projects Inc
- Fishbone Kitchen Holdings, Inc. (Fishbone Kitchen – San Diego)
- Roberto Viggilucci (Viggilucci's – Carlsbad)
- Warman Holdings LLC (Valentina – Encinitas)

Please see text message conversations between Freeman and most of these buyers for supporting evidence.

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EVIDENCE OF MARIJUANA SALES AND CULTIVATION

While reviewing text messages and photographs in Freeman's iCloud account for natural resource crimes, I saw in plain view evidence of unlawful marijuana cultivation and sales. In response, I prepared a search warrant to expand the scope of search of the records to include crimes related to the cultivation and sales of marijuana. On March 27, 2023, the honorable Judge Joseph Brannigan signed search warrant 2303271641-OTH-JPB-SW authorizing the expanded search of the seized records.

Within the iCloud media, I found dozens of photographs and videos of multiple indoor marijuana grows containing hundreds of marijuana plants (see attachment folder 5.1). The marijuana grows are mostly contained in what appears to be a garage or outbuilding lined with white plastic sheeting. Indoor lights, fans, air conditioners, and watering systems are also visible in the media. Additionally, there are many images of large quantities of processed marijuana in clear plastic bags. These images are as old as October 9, 2020 and as recent as November 27, 2022. Note: the iCloud media available to me is only as recent as December 20, 2022.

During my investigation, I found Freeman's significant other is Rosemarie Flores of Valley Center (supported by text messages and photographs). I also know from reading text messages that Freeman, Flores, and Freeman's adult son lived at [REDACTED]. This property contains multiple outbuildings and a greenhouse.

According to online sources, Freeman's significant other (Flores) owns at least three properties: (1) [REDACTED] (2) [REDACTED] and (3) [REDACTED]. Within Freeman's iCloud media, two videos containing GPS data captured two different marijuana grows. One video placed the grow at [REDACTED] and the other grow near [REDACTED].

The first video was captured on January 28, 2021 with the coordinates [REDACTED] placing it on the premises of [REDACTED]. There are approximately 100 marijuana plants in what appears to be a white canopy tent with canvas draped to the ground. From online aerial images, a white canopy tent is visible in the front of the residence.

The second video was captured on May 17, 2021 with the coordinates [REDACTED] placing it approximately 200 yards from [REDACTED]. This grow is more complex, complete with fans, air conditioning, netting, etc. and contains approximately 200 marijuana plants. This grow also appears to be in a permanent structure such as a garage or outbuilding. I know from my training and experience that GPS locations are not always exact and may wander from the actual location, especially if the unit (or cellular device) is not given time to calibrate its exact location. Lastly, this indoor grow is photographed (without GPS location) numerous times throughout Freeman's iCloud account, and as recent as November 24, 2022.

Furthermore, text messages support there are marijuana grows at both addresses. The following are several examples.

I know from my investigation that Jennie Filippello resides at or is associated with [REDACTED]. This is supported by text messages Filippello exchanged with Freeman and a search of the law enforcement database TLOxp. In a text message conversation between the two on May 22, 2021, Filippello informed Freeman she was having dinner at the [REDACTED] residence and asked if a man named David could come over for dinner. Freeman ultimately agreed to allow David over at the house and wrote he hoped David would not "blow the whistle" about his "gig."

It is also evident by text messages that Sean Murphy frequently assisted Freeman with his marijuana grows in 2020 and 2021. They often discussed planting, cloning, watering, trimming, maintaining, and selling marijuana. They often refer to two locations when attending to their grows, the "warehouse" and the "farmhouse." Within these locations they refer to multiple rooms such as the nighttime room, garage room, veg room, daytime room, flower room, LED room, outhouse room, and granny flat. For example, on February 2, 2021, Murphy wrote, "Everything is looking great at the warehouse and farmhouse. Nighttime warehouse is proper. LED room is mental. I'm mixing watering granny flat right now. We plated 7 clone trays today into 4 inch."

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On November 30, 2020, Murphy text messaged Freeman and told him he was at the farmhouse speaking with Jennie. Because Jennie resides at or is associated with the [REDACTED] address, this leads me to believe the farmhouse is located at [REDACTED]. Several other text message conversations support there is a marijuana grow at the [REDACTED] address, and Freeman provided this address for a delivery of tupur (used as a marijuana growing medium) and worm castings (an organic fertilizer).

On June 2, 2022, a contact stored as "Derick Quines" messaged Freeman and told him he was leaving his house. Derick Quines then wrote, "My buds are in the brown Sprouts paper bag on one of the bar chairs. I think I only trimmed a little over 400 grams." This leads me to believe marijuana trimming occurred at the [REDACTED] address.

On September 9, 2022, a contact stored in Freeman's account listed as "Nyla Fink" text messaged Freeman and informed him she was at his house and there were 44 bags total. Freeman asked if she had bagged the "purple stuff" separately and mentioned the "trimmers" had separated it. Nyla Fink then wrote she separated the green from the purple before they trimmed it. Freeman wrote he could get more "dough" for purple bags at \$1200 per bag. This conversation suggests the processing of the marijuana took place at the [REDACTED] address.

On September 12, 2022, a contact stored in Freeman's account listed as "Pete" text messaged Freeman and asked if he could "come by and get paid for work." Freeman agreed, and a week later, Pete messaged Freeman and said he may have left his trimming scissors at Freeman's house – suggesting Pete trimmed marijuana for Freeman at the [REDACTED] address.

Throughout the 2022 calendar year, Freeman had several text messages conversations with "Marks." It is clear from text messages that Marks waters and maintains Freeman's grow and may have taken over for Sean Murphy. Marks often mentioned the warehouse when attending to plants, believed to be located at the Cool Valley address. In one message on June 7, 2022, Marks wrote, "Yo at your pad just went to warehouse watered everything."

The following text message conversations support Freeman is selling or has sold large amounts of marijuana.

On August 26, 2021, a contact stored as "Ryan Limits" wrote, "Trim tomorrow?" and "My boy wants 20 of em when they're ready!" Freeman responded, "Once the rooms are cleared out we gotta replant." The following week, Freeman and Ryan Limits exchanged several texts in which they discuss what appears to be selling marijuana for \$24 per an unknown unit. Ryan Limits later told Freeman he sold 2 units for "24" and that he can sell the remainder of the product for "23," which Freeman agrees to. Ryan Limits later told Freeman he had cash for him.

On December 1, 2021, Freeman messaged Ryan Limits and stated he had "more." Ryan Limits said, "One of my boys was interested but is getting stuff of the same quality for a little lower price." Freeman then agreed to sell at "19," and Ryan Limits said he "can move a couple at that price."

A review of Freeman's Chase bank account records revealed Freeman deposited large quantities of cash. Between December 3, 2020 and May 24, 2021, Freeman deposited \$77,166.00 in cash into his checking account – further supporting Freeman is unlawfully profiting from marijuana sales and cultivation. Large quantities of cash have been deposited into Freeman's account as recent as January 17, 2023 (data obtained in February 2023). Additionally, there is strong evidence to suggest that Freeman's only sources of income are from the unlawful sales of fish and marijuana.

It was also evident that Freeman did not possess a validate license/permit to cultivate and sell marijuana. On February 7, 2021, Freeman exchanged messages with a contact stored in his account as "Noah/fisherman." Noah/fisherman explained he has a friend with a "store and a grow" and that he himself wants to do it legally too. Freeman told him to "keep it on the black market" and wrote, "Fuck all those taxes." Noah/fisherman responded and said it (presumably cultivating without a permit) is a big risk, and he did not have the network. Freeman responded, "Not really. Slap on the hand." The two then discussed how much product they could "move" per year.

On March 6, 2023, I contacted CDFW's environmental scientist Kevin Hupf, who is assigned to the department's

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Cannabis Program, regarding any cannabis permit belonging to Freeman. Hupf wrote, "I have searched CDFW's Project Tracking permitting database, CDFW's EPIMS permitting portal, and the Department of Cannabis Control's license database for the name Chad Freeman. I have found no information regarding a Chad Freeman having authorization to cultivate, process, distribute, or sell commercial cannabis in California."

On July 20 and July 21 of 2023, Lt Richards of CDFW's Cannabis Enforcement Program researched possible marijuana licenses and permits through the State Water Control Board, County of San Diego, and Department of Cannabis Control. Lt Richard confirmed the [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] addresses, Freeman, nor the property owner (Flores) possessed a valid license to cultivate marijuana with any agency.

SEARCH WARRANT FOR RESIDENCES

Due to the overwhelming amount of evidence found in Freeman's Apple iCloud account and financial records, I authored a search warrant for the premises of [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] in Valley Center. On July 25, 2023, the honorable Judge Michael Washington signed search warrant 2307260932-OTH-MZW-SW authorizing the search of the premises and vehicles/persons on the premises.

On July 27, 2023, Warden Garber performed a flyover in a fixed winged aircraft of the [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] addresses. During the flyover, Freeman's Ford F150 was parked at the outbuilding on the [REDACTED] property. Warden Garber also noted irrigation hosing and air vents on top of the outbuilding – both of which are indications of an indoor marijuana cultivation site. Lastly, a Tesla sedan (a Tesla is registered to both Freeman and Flores) was parked at the [REDACTED] address. See attachment folder 6.1 of the media provided by Warden Garber.

On the morning of July 30, 2023, officers from CDFW and the San Diego Sheriff's Department met near Oak Glen High School in Valley Center to serve search warrants at [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] in Valley Center.

Officers were split into two teams, Team 1 and Team 2. Team 1 was assigned to [REDACTED] and Team 2 was assigned to [REDACTED]. Team 1 was comprised of 10 CDFW officers consisting of Wardens Garber, Brassfield, Baquirin, Noriega, McCain, Krause, Brandt, Barclay, Lt Vuich, and me. Team 2 was comprised of 7 CDFW officers and 8 SDO officers consisting of Wardens Sastre Rivera, Galapir, Molsberry, Garcia, Nguyen, Lt Richards, Lt Holyoak, Sgt. Nick Backouris 9484, Det. Zach Harris 7328, Det. Frank Haskell 2484, Det. Mike Astorga 7454, Det. Wes Hatfield 0442, SED Dep. Peter Myers 7284, SED Dep. Matthew Younkman 3775, and SED Dep. Derek Baray 0672.

Service at [REDACTED]

At approximately 0700 hours, Team 1 left Oak Glen High School and arrived at 14855 Cool Valley Rd at approximately 0705 hours. The chain-link gate to the driveway of the residence was open upon arrival. Officers drove up to the residence and performed a surround and callout with duty weapons deployed.

From a patrol vehicle's PA, Warden Brandt announced continuously, "Police. Fish & Wildlife. Search Warrant. Come to the door." After less than a minute, Freeman (who I immediately recognized from photographs) exited the front door of the residence, was searched for weapons by officers, and placed in handcuffs. After several more minutes, three more men exited the front door of the residence; they were also searched for weapons and placed in handcuffs. These men were later identified by Warden Barclay by their California driver licenses as Andrew Murphy, Prarthna Roles, and Ryan Alley.

After making announcements for several more minutes, officers advanced to the front door. Warden Garber knocked on the front window and made announcements (police, search warrant) continuously for at least 30 seconds. After no answer, officers entered the residence and cleared it for any other persons inside. Officers then cleared the attached garage and outbuildings on the property. No other persons were found.

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Before any searches for evidence were conducted, Warden Brassfield took a video recording of the house, and I took video recordings of the attached garage and outbuildings. Warden Brassfield was assigned to evidence collection and documentation. I often assisted Brassfield in photographing, labeling, and collection. After the recordings were completed, all four men were released from handcuffs and moved into the living room of the residence.

The following is a summary of pertinent evidence found at the residence. For complete details and procedure, please see Warden's Brassfield's supplemental report. For marijuana sampling procedures, please see Warden Krause's report.

Upon entering the residence, we found four large bins containing marijuana that appeared to be dried and ready for trimming in the living room. We also found mail and other documents with Freeman's and Flores' name on them.

The dining room was seemingly being used as a trimming station as there was plastic covering the floor, a bin of untrimmed marijuana, multiple bags and trays of trimmed marijuana, a temporary table, lights, scissors, etc.

An upstairs bedroom was utilized as a processing and packaging room. We found hundreds of empty containers for cannabis waxes, lotions, droplets and vape pens. We found a label maker and printed labels for several products that contained the name "Dr. Rosebudz" (Flores is a chiropractor and her first name is Rose). There were also hundreds of packaged and filled cannabis vape pens, waxes, lotions, salve, and oil droplets often bearing the name Dr. Rosebudz that were apparently ready for individual sale. There were large amounts of processed marijuana in the room; one bag of marijuana even appeared to be infused with a cinnamon scent presumably for one of the products listed above. There were also several mason-sized jars with apparent cannabis oils. Lastly, there was a pneumatic paste filling machine with a wax/oil residue still in the funnel. Several of these items, more processed marijuana, and Dr. Rosebudz order forms were also found in the front office with much of Flores' documents (tax return, documents, mail).

The attached garage served as an indoor cultivation site. There were walls built inside the garage for apparent insulation for the plants. Inside the garage, we found 60 mature marijuana plants that appeared to be ready for harvest. There were indoor lights, fans, CO2 cannisters, sophisticated watering systems, fertilizers, etc. in the garage.

The detached garage contained another cultivation site that had recently been harvested. There were plants that were hung to dry and dozens of pots with soil on the floor. There were also fans, air conditioning, and a sophisticated watering system within the detached garage.

Freeman's Ford F150 Raptor contained four different piles of cash for a total of \$27,068. Two envelopes were discovered under passenger seat containing 100 - \$100 bills (\$10,000) and 100 - \$50 bills (\$5,000). An additional 32 - \$100 (\$3,200) bills were found under the back floormat and \$8,868 was found in a duffle bag in the vehicle.

The F150 also contained an accordion folder containing fish records including three recent paper landing receipts he failed to submit (violation of FG § 8046(a)) and blank landing receipts. The blank landing receipts were photocopied and prefilled out with his name, license number, and port of landing, among other things. Freeman also prefilled the commercial block number of 850 for all copies, which would be inherently inaccurate. Furthermore, landing receipts are to be submitted electronically rather than pen and paper, pursuant to Title 14 § 197. Additionally, two checks from Kai Ola Sushi (memo: bluefin) and Harney Sushi written on July 29, 2023 were seized from vehicle.

A letter from CDFW was also found in the F150. The letter was to provide fish businesses with a quarterly report of landing fees due for fish landed during the preceding quarter – though no fees were due because Freeman was not submitting landings to CDFW. This provides further evidence Freeman willfully neglected the landing requirements as he was given quarterly notices.

Lastly, Freeman's iPhone and Apple MacBook were seized from the master bedroom/bath. Freeman's California ID was found inside his phone case.

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In total, 166.6lbs of processed marijuana, 60 mature marijuana plants, 65 filled and individually packaged THC oil bottles, 270 filled and individually packaged vape pens, 170 filled and individually packaged waxes/lotions/salves, 11 jars of cannabis oil, and \$27,068 were seized from the [REDACTED] address.

Lt Vuich and I attempted to interview Freeman during the service of the search warrant (audio recorded). When asked, Freeman told us he did not have any licenses or permits to cultivate marijuana. Before proceeding with any other questioning, I read Freeman Miranda Rights from a CDFW Miranda card out of an abundance of caution. Freeman told us he understood his rights. He said he was willing to speak with us, but he would not self-incriminate.

Freeman was unwilling to answer questions or was unwilling to answer them truthfully. However, when I asked Freeman if his marijuana operation was solo or in conjunction with another person, Freeman stated it was a solo operation. He further stated his friends at his house were helping him but were uninvolved.

I provided Freeman with a formal records request for fish records since April 2020 to present day, pursuant to FG § 8046 and § 8050. When explaining the records request to Freeman, he stated he did not maintain such records, a violation of FG § 8046(a) and § 8050(c). Since April 2020, Freeman has engaged in approximately 48 undocumented fish transactions that he failed to maintain records for (known from financial and phone records).

Lastly, I provided Freeman with search warrants for Apple (2x), Chase Bank, Venmo, and PayPal. I also provided ECPA notifications for both Apple search warrants, return of inventory forms for all search warrants, and all delay extension notifications for all search warrants. Lt Vuich had previously provided Freeman with the current residential search warrant earlier in the day.

In my opinion, no other pertinent information was gathered from Freeman during the interview. Please see the audio recording provided for the entire interview.

Toward the end of the service, San Diego Gas & Electric (SDG&E) and County Code Enforcement were notified by officers of the illegal marijuana cultivation. Before officers left the residences, an SDG&E technician turned off power to both the Cool Valley and Yellow Brick addresses. Please see County Code Enforcements supplemental report for violations documented by code enforcement.

Upon completion of the service at the residence, I provided Freeman with all three pages of the receipt of inventory form documenting all that had been seized from the residence. Other than the marijuana samples collected by Warden Krause, all marijuana and marijuana products were loaded into a trailer that was ultimately taken to the dump. Warden Krause also took possession of the pneumatic paste filling machine and stored it at CEP's warehouse. All other evidence was then placed into Warden Brassfield's patrol vehicle and booked into evidence at CDFW HQ in San Diego by Warden Brassfield.

Please see attachment folder 6.2 for media related to the search warrant at [REDACTED]

Service at [REDACTED]

Shortly after Team 1 made entry into the [REDACTED] residence, a gate opener for the [REDACTED] residence was located and provided to Team 2. Team 2 then arrived at the [REDACTED] address and performed a surround and callout. The property owner, Rosemarie Flores, and one other adult female (later identified as Patricia Galura) were present in the residence and complied.

Supplemental reports were completed by Lt Richards (team leader), Warden Molsberry (evidence collection), Lt Holyoak (interview of Flores), County HazMat's Manon Maschue, and County Code Enforcement's Carlos Wallis. Please see their reports for complete details. The following is a summary of the most pertinent evidence that was collected at the residence.

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The outbuilding located on the premises served as an indoor cultivation site and held 337 live "clones" (marijuana plants started from trimmings of a larger plant) and 10 "mother" marijuana plants. Within the outbuilding were three grow rooms built similar to that in the garage at the [REDACTED] residence. Much like the [REDACTED] cultivation sites, there were grow lights, HVAC, large CO2 tanks, soil, complex watering systems, etc. Additionally, 129.4lbs of processed marijuana was seized and destroyed from the outbuilding.

In the outbuilding was a closed loop CO2 extraction lab. County HazMat responded to deconstruct the lab for safety. The extraction lab was ultimately seized and retained by SDSO. The following three paragraphs were prepared by Det. Haskell to describe the function of the lab.

A clandestine Tetrahydrocannabinol (THC) extraction laboratory consists of marijuana plant material which is tightly packed into an extraction device such as a glass, plastic (PVC) or metal tube or in some cases a butane or CO2 specific closed-loop extraction system. Then a type of solvent such as butane or CO2 is introduced into the extraction device causing the THC from the marijuana plant material to be chemically extracted. The THC then drips out of the bottom of the extraction device and into a holding container, typically cooking glassware. Heat is later applied to the substance to burn off the solvent used to extract the THC. The product is a honey-like concentrated cannabis substance commonly referred to as "honey oil", "hash oil" or "wax."

In this case, a fully functional Apeks Supercritical CO2 extraction device was present in a garage at the location. This THC extraction device was completely filled within marijuana plant trimmings, commonly referred to as "shake", a clear indication this device was solely being utilized to extract THC. To get CO2 to behave like a solvent such as butane, it will have to be brought to what is referred to as a "supercritical" state. This is achieved by introducing a tremendous amount of pressure and temperature control.

The process of extracting THC using CO2-based device presents a tremendous risk to public safety based on the amount of pressure that is needed to obtain a supercritical state. If this device was to fail, you would have a pressure-based explosion. Additionally, if the CO2 leaks from the device, it will quickly displace oxygen thus creating a risk for those within close proximity to the device.

End summary prepared by Det. Haskell.

In the garage of the residence, 92.4lbs of processed marijuana was seized and destroyed, and \$3,746 in cash was seized from a Telsa vehicle registered to both Freeman and Flores. Please see Lt Richards report for marijuana sampling procedures.

Lt Holyoak attempted to interview Flores, but she provided little information. Flores told Lt Holyoak she had lived on the property since about April but did not know about the marijuana grown and processed on the property. She invoked the right to an attorney shortly after. Additionally, Flores was provided a copy of the search warrant and the inventory forms prior to officers leaving the premises. Please see the complete supplemental report.

Please see attachment folder 6.3 for all media related to the search warrant at [REDACTED]

In all, 407 live marijuana plants, 388.4lbs of processed marijuana, \$30,814 in cash, 505 cannabis/THC products, and a CO2 closed loop extraction lab were seized from the two residences.

Upon completion of the search warrants, Warden Molsberry transferred evidence to Warden Brassfield. I then accompanied Warden Brassfield to our headquarters to book evidence. Prior to booking, I took detailed evidence photographs of documents, receipts, checks, etc. Please see attachment 6.4 for the photographs.

INTERVIEWS OF PERSONS ASSOCIATED WITH ILLEGAL FISH SALES

During or following the service of the search warrant, Michael Haig of Harney Sushi, Ryan Ashton of Kai Ola Sushi,

Preparer's Name and Badge Number SMITH, AUSTIN T 0860	Date 1/11/2023	Reviewer's Name VUICH, TRAVIS R 0617	Date 9/6/2023
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Date/Time of Incident/Occurrence 07/31/2023 7:05		City/County/Judicial Jurisdiction VALLEY CENTER/SAN DIEGO/SAN DIEGO SUPERIOR	
Type of Arrest FORMAL COMPLAINT	Type of Contact SELF-INITIATED	RMS Case Number: FW-2301-0145	
Type of Report CANNABIS, FISH & GAME CODE, COMMERCIAL FISHING			
Location/Subject/Incident Name UNLAWFUL SALES OF FISH & MARIJUANA		Arresting/Case Officer SMITH, AUSTIN T 0860	

Colin Whitbread of Fiish LLC, Christopher Culver, and Tanner Saraspe were interviewed, or an interview was attempted by several different wardens. The following is a summary of the interviews. Please see the attached supplemental reports for complete details.

Michael Haig – 2 additional counts FG § 8046(a)

On July 31, 2023, Wardens Noriega and Brassfield conducted a fish business inspection (FBI) at Harney Sushi in Oceanside. There, they found a recent bluefin sold by Freeman. Wardens were provided a dock ticket Freeman gave to Harney Sushi rather than an invoice, which is not typical. Freeman failed to submit the landing to CDFW, a violation of FG § 8046(a). The wardens left a formal request for records letter with the manager of Harney Sushi as Haig was not present. The request was for purchases from fishermen for the dates July 1, 2020 through present day.

A few days later, Haig contacted me directly via telephone and explained to me that he was willing to provide me with anything I needed and thought he was lawfully purchasing fish from Freeman. He told me Freeman informed him of the 2022 investigation (Whitmarsh investigation) and stopped purchasing fish from Freeman for the remainder of the year. However, he had purchased fish from Freeman in 2023.

Haig was able to provide me a PDF of checks written to both Christopher Culver and Freeman from 2020-2023 via email. The PDF included a recent check written on July 23, 2023 for \$910.00 to Freeman, which was not documented in a landing receipt submitted to CDFW – a violation of FG § 8046(a). See the PDF for complete details (attachment folder 7.1). Note: the second count of § 8046(a) is from the check from Haig written on July 29, 2023 discovered in Freeman's F150.

Ryan Ashton – 3 additional counts FG § 8046(a)

On July 30, 2023, Wardens Brandt and Grasinski conducted an FBI at Kai Ola Sushi. Similar to Harney Sushi, the wardens found a bluefin that had been recently sold by Freeman along with a dock ticket. The landing was not submitted to CDFW, a violation of FG § 8046(a). The wardens left a formal request for records with staff for purchases from commercial fishermen for the dates July 1, 2020 through present day.

Ashton was not present at the restaurant, but Warden Brandt was able to interview Ashton by telephone. Ashton was hesitant to answer questions but did admit to purchasing bluefin tuna from Freeman.

On August 15, 2023, Ashton's bookkeeper emailed me a spreadsheet documenting purchases from both Culver and Freeman from 2020-2023. Three more transactions were documented by the bookkeeper that occurred between January 1, 2023 and July 29, 2023. See attachment folder 7.2 for all media related to Ashton.

Colin Whitbread

On August 4, 2023, Warden McLennan contacted Whitbread at his business at 3365 Mission Ave in Oceanside. Upon initial questioning, Whitbread denied purchasing fish from commercial fishermen in 2022 and 2023 and said he did not know anyone by the name Chad Freeman. Warden McLennan informed Whitbread he had information he had purchased fish from Freeman. Whitbread said he may have purchased fish from Freeman and never physically checked Freeman's commercial fishing license. Whitbread then invoked his right to an attorney. Warden McLennan provided Whitbread with a formal records request for purchases from fishermen for the dates July 1, 2020 through present day.

On August 8, 2023, I returned a missed call from Whitbread. Whitbread told me he spoke with his attorney and was advised to cooperate with the investigation. Whitbread told me he was misled and believed Freeman was a licensed commercial fisherman and believed Freeman landed the fish prior to Whitbread purchasing the fish. He recalled purchasing bluefin tuna from Freeman and paid him \$1000 on Venmo.

On August 21, 2023, Whitbread provided me with an email detailing he purchased tuna from Freeman on May 8, 2022

Preparer's Name and Badge Number SMITH, AUSTIN T 0860	Date 1/11/2023	Reviewer's Name VUICH, TRAVIS R 0617	Date 9/6/2023
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Date/Time of Incident/Occurrence 07/31/2023 7:05		City/County/Judicial Jurisdiction VALLEY CENTER/SAN DIEGO/SAN DIEGO SUPERIOR	
Type of Arrest FORMAL COMPLAINT		Type of Contact SELF-INITIATED	RMS Case Number: FW-2301-0145
Type of Report CANNABIS, FISH & GAME CODE, COMMERCIAL FISHING			
Location/Subject/Incident Name UNLAWFUL SALES OF FISH & MARIJUANA			Arresting/Case Officer SMITH, AUSTIN T 0860

and May 20, 2022. Please see attachment folder 7.3.

Christopher Culver and Tanner Saraspe

On July 30, 2023, wardens attempted to contact Culver and Saraspe. My contact information was left for each of them; however, neither person called me. Culver and Saraspe will be contacted in the future, and a supplemental report will be submitted, if necessary.

SUBSEQUENT INVESTIGATION

After the search warrant of the residences, I authored a search warrant for the electronic devices seized. On August 9, 2023, the honorable Judge Roderick Shelton signed search warrant 2308091439-OTH-RWS-SW to search Freeman's iPhone, MacBook Pro, hard drive, and SD card. Freeman was provided a copy of the search warrant, inventory form, and ECPA notification via email on August 17, 2023 (attachment 8.1).

The electronic devices were submitted to the San Diego District Attorney's CATCH team for forensic download. Once I review the records on the devices, I will submit a supplemental report and relevant evidence.

I respectfully request the following charges to be filed:

1. **Fish & Game Code § 12012(a) – Unlawful Profit on Fish**
 - i. 17 counts
 - ii. Three-year statute of limitations
 - iii. Min/max penalty - \$5,000-\$40,000 and/or imprisonment not more than 1 year
2. **Fish & Game Code § 8046(a) – Failure to Submit Landings to CDFW and Maintain Records of Landings**
 - i. 53 counts
3. **Fish & Game Code § 8050(c) – Failure to Maintain Records**
 - i. 48 counts
4. **Health & Safety Code § 11358(c) – Cultivate more than six living plants.**
 - i. 407 living plants
5. **Health & Safety Code § 11358(d)(3)(B) – Cannabis cultivation in violation Water Code 13260.**
 - i. Felony
6. **Health & Safety Code § 11359 – Possession for Sale of Marijuana**
 - i. 388.4lbs of processed marijuana, \$30,814 in cash, 505 cannabis/THC products, and a CO2 closed loop extraction lab

Preparer's Name and Badge Number SMITH, AUSTIN T 0860	Date 1/11/2023	Reviewer's Name VUICH, TRAVIS R 0617	Date 9/6/2023
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Exhibit 6

Complaint

San Diego County Superior Court

CN452248

**SUPERIOR COURT OF CALIFORNIA, COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO
NORTH COUNTY DIVISION**

FILED
2024 FEB 15 A 9:30
CLERK SUPERIOR COURT
SAN DIEGO COUNTY, CA

THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA,	Plaintiff,
v.	
CHAD FREEMAN, <i>dob 01/31/72;</i>	Defendant

CT No. CN452248

DA No. OCZ346

COMPLAINT-FELONY

AFFIDAVIT REQUIRED

INFORMATION

Date: _____

PC296 DNA TEST STATUS SUMMARY

Defendant

FREEMAN, CHAD

DNA Testing Requirements

DNA sample required upon conviction

CHARGE SUMMARY

Count	Charge	Issue Type	Sentence Range	Special Allegations	Allegation Effect
1	RT55363 FREEMAN, CHAD	Felony	16-2-3/\$5,000		
2	RT6071 FREEMAN, CHAD	Misdemeanor	1 Yr\Fine		
3	HS11358(c) FREEMAN, CHAD	Misdemeanor	6 Mos/\$500		
4	HS11359(b) FREEMAN, CHAD	Misdemeanor	6 Mos/\$500		
5	RT6452(c) FREEMAN, CHAD	Misdemeanor	6 Mos\Fine		
6	FG12012(a) FREEMAN, CHAD	Misdemeanor	1Yr/\$40,000		
7	FG12012(a) FREEMAN, CHAD	Misdemeanor	1Yr/\$40,000		

CHARGE SUMMARY (cont'd)

Count	Charge	Issue Type	Sentence Range	Special Allegations	Allegation Effect
8	FG12012(a) FREEMAN, CHAD	Misdemeanor	1Yr/\$40,000		
9	FG12012(a) FREEMAN, CHAD	Misdemeanor	1Yr/\$40,000		
10	FG12012(a) FREEMAN, CHAD	Misdemeanor	1Yr/\$40,000		

PC1054.3

INFORMAL REQUEST FOR DISCOVERY

The undersigned, certifying upon information and belief, complains that in the County of San Diego, State of California, the Defendant(s) did commit the following crime(s):

CHARGES

COUNT 1 - EVASION OF PAYMENT

On or about July 30, 2023, CHAD FREEMAN did willfully evade or defeat the payment of the fee imposed by Revenue and Taxation Code section 55011 et seq., or a fee otherwise imposed by law, to wit: RT34010 et seq, in violation of REVENUE AND TAXATION CODE SECTION 55363.

COUNT 2 - SELLING WITHOUT A PERMIT

On or about July 30, 2023, CHAD FREEMAN an officer of a corporation did unlawfully engage in business as a seller without a permit, in violation of REVENUE AND TAXATION CODE SECTION 6071.

COUNT 3 - CULTIVATING CANNABIS - MORE THAN SIX (6) PLANTS

On or about July 30, 2023, CHAD FREEMAN, did unlawfully plant, cultivate, harvest, dry, and process more than six (6) living cannabis plants, in violation of HEALTH AND SAFETY CODE SECTION 11358(c).

COUNT 4 - POSSESSION OF CANNABIS FOR SALE

On or about July 30, 2023, CHAD FREEMAN did unlawfully possess cannabis for sale, in violation of HEALTH AND SAFETY CODE SECTION 11359(b).

CHARGES (cont'd)

COUNT 5 - FAILURE TO FURNISH TAX RETURN

On or about July 30, 2023, CHAD FREEMAN, a retailer and person required to file a return, did wilfully and unlawfully fail and refuse to furnish a return and supplemental return and other data required by the board, in violation of REVENUE AND TAXATION CODE SECTION 6452(c).

COUNT 6 - POSSESSION FOR PERSONAL GAIN

On or about and between April 12, 2021 and March 31, 2023, CHAD FREEMAN did illegally take, possess, import, export, sell, purchase, barter, trade, and exchange any amphibian, bird, fish, mammal, and reptile, and part thereof, for profit and personal gain
in violation of FISH AND GAME CODE SECTION 12012.

COUNT 7 - POSSESSION FOR PERSONAL GAIN

On or about and between April 12, 2021 and March 31, 2023, CHAD FREEMAN did illegally take, possess, import, export, sell, purchase, barter, trade, and exchange any amphibian, bird, fish, mammal, and reptile, and part thereof, for profit and personal gain
in violation of FISH AND GAME CODE SECTION 12012.

COUNT 8 - POSSESSION FOR PERSONAL GAIN

On or about and between April 12, 2021 and March 31, 2023, CHAD FREEMAN did illegally take, possess, import, export, sell, purchase, barter, trade, and exchange any amphibian, bird, fish, mammal, and reptile, and part thereof, for profit and personal gain
in violation of FISH AND GAME CODE SECTION 12012.

COUNT 9 - POSSESSION FOR PERSONAL GAIN

On or about and between April 12, 2021 and March 31, 2023, CHAD FREEMAN did illegally take, possess, import, export, sell, purchase, barter, trade, and exchange any amphibian, bird, fish, mammal, and reptile, and part thereof, for profit and personal gain
in violation of FISH AND GAME CODE SECTION 12012.

COUNT 10 - POSSESSION FOR PERSONAL GAIN

On or about and between April 12, 2021 and March 31, 2023, CHAD FREEMAN did illegally take, possess, import, export, sell, purchase, barter, trade, and exchange any amphibian, bird, fish, mammal, and reptile, and part thereof, for profit and personal gain

CHARGES (cont'd)

in violation of FISH AND GAME CODE SECTION 12012.

NOTICE: Any defendant named on this complaint who is on criminal probation in San Diego County is, by receiving this complaint, on notice that the evidence presented to the court at the preliminary hearing on this complaint is presented for a dual purpose: the People are seeking a holding order on the charges pursuant to Penal Code Section 872 and simultaneously, the People are seeking a revocation of the defendant's probation, on any and all such probation grants, utilizing the same evidence, at the preliminary hearing. Defenses to either or both procedures should be considered and presented as appropriate at the preliminary hearing.

NOTICE: Any defendant named on this complaint who is on Mandatory Supervision, Post Release Community Supervision, and Parole Supervision in San Diego County is, by receiving this complaint, on notice that the evidence presented to the court at the preliminary hearing on this complaint is presented for a dual purpose: the People are seeking a holding order on the charges pursuant to Penal Code Section 872 and simultaneously, the People are seeking a revocation of the defendant's Mandatory Supervision, Post Release Community Supervision, and Parole Supervision pursuant to Penal Code Sections 1170(h)(5)(B) and 1203.2 (a)(4), on any and all such grants, utilizing the same evidence, at the preliminary hearing. Defense to either or both procedures should be considered and presented as appropriate at the preliminary hearing.

Pursuant to PENAL CODE SECTION 1054.5(b), the People are hereby informally requesting that defendant's counsel provide discovery to the People as required by PENAL CODE SECTION 1054.3.

Sheriff's records indicate that as of the booking date one or more defendants have not yet provided a DNA sample to the DOJ database. Pursuant to Penal Code Section 296(e), the court shall order collection of DNA from the defendant(s) if advised by the prosecuting attorney that a sample is required but has not been provided by the defendant. Pursuant to Penal Code sections 296/296.1, if not already required from a past conviction, any defendants who have not done so will be required to provide a sample upon conviction of this felony offense.

I DECLARE UNDER PENALTY OF PERJURY THAT THE FOREGOING IS TRUE AND CORRECT AND THAT THIS COMPLAINT, CASE NUMBER CN452248, CONSISTS OF 10 COUNTS.

Executed at City of Vista, County of San Diego, State of California, on February 15, 2024.


COMPLAINANT

INFORMATION

SUMMER STEPHAN
District Attorney
County of San Diego
State of California
by:

Date

Deputy District Attorney



CLERK'S CERTIFICATE

The foregoing 5 page(s) is a true and correct copy of ☒ the original ☐ a copy on file with this office. It is ☒ the entire document ☐ an excerpt from a document.

Clerk of the Superior Court
06-12-2026 by 
Date Deputy 0

Exhibit 7

Plea Form

San Diego County Superior Court

CN452248

FILED
FOR COUNTY SUPERIOR COURT

SUPERIOR COURT OF CALIFORNIA, COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO

JUN 27 2024

PEOPLE vs.

Chad Freeman

Defendant

COURT CASE NUMBER - Mr. J. Moynihan

CN 452208

DA OR CA CASE NUMBER

PLEA OF GUILTY/NO CONTEST - MISDEMEANOR

INSTRUCTIONS: Fill out this form if you wish to plead guilty or no contest to the charges against you. Initial each applicable item only if you understand it. If you have any questions about your case, the possible sentence, or the information on this form, ask your attorney or the judge.

I, the defendant in the above-entitled case, personally and/or by my attorney, declare as follows:

1. Of those charges now filed against me in this case, I plead

Guilty

GUILTY/NO CONTEST

to the following offenses and admit the enhancements, allegations, and prior convictions as follows:

COUNT	CHARGE	ENHANCEMENT/ALLEGATION
2	PC 6071	
3	HS 11359(CC)	
6	PC 12012.0	

PRIORS: (LIST ALLEGATION SECTION, CONVICTION DATE, CASE NUMBER AND CHARGE)

2. I have not been induced to enter the above plea by any promise or representation of any kind, except:

(State any agreement with the prosecutor.)

Dismiss Release; With Waiver; Forfeit Seized Marijuana and Equipment Related to Cannabis Cultivation

3. I am entering a plea freely and voluntarily, without threat or fear to me or anyone closely related to me.
4. I understand that a plea of No Contest is the same as a plea of Guilty for all purposes.
5. I am sober and my judgment is not impaired. I have not consumed any drug, alcohol or narcotic within the past 24 hours.

RIGHT TO AN ATTORNEY

6. I understand that I have the Constitutional right to be represented by an attorney at all stages of the proceedings including sentencing. I can hire my own attorney or the court will appoint an attorney for me if I cannot afford one. I understand the dangers and disadvantages of representing myself and that it is usually unwise to represent myself.
- 6a. I understand that I have the right to be present in court to enter my plea and for sentencing. I expressly authorize my attorney to enter this plea on my behalf, in my absence. I expressly authorize my attorney to appear for me at sentencing.
- 6b. I give up the right to an attorney and wish to represent myself.

CONSTITUTIONAL RIGHTS

I understand that as to all charges, allegations and prior convictions filed against me I also have the following constitutional rights, which I now give up to enter my plea of guilty/no contest:

7. I have the right to a speedy and public trial by jury. I now give up this right.

DEFENDANT <u>Chad Freeman</u>	CASE NUMBER <u>CN 452248</u>
-------------------------------	------------------------------

8. I have the right to **confront and cross-examine all the witnesses** against me. I now give up this right. ☒ 8.
9. I have the right to **remain silent** (unless I choose to testify on my own behalf). I now give up this right. ☒ 9.
10. I have the right to **present evidence in my behalf** and to have the court subpoena my witnesses at no cost to me. I now give up this right. ☒ 10.

CONSEQUENCES OF PLEA OF GUILTY OR NO CONTEST

11. I understand the possible consequences of entering a plea of Guilty/No Contest include a maximum sentence of up to 6 months/year(s) in jail and fine(s) of up to 1000 plus additional consequences specified in any attached addendum, and any other reasonable conditions of probation, which could be for a maximum of 3/5 years. ☒ 11.
12. My attorney has explained to me that other possible consequences of this plea may be (circle appropriate consequences): (a) lifetime registration as a sex offender; (b) registration as a narcotics offender; (c) limited local custody credits (290/serious/prior); (d) qualified for sentencing under PC § 1170(h)(3) in future cases. ☒ 12.
13. I understand that in addition to any fine imposed, the law requires the court to add penalty assessments which will substantially increase the amount I must pay. In addition, I understand that I may be ordered to make restitution to the victim, if the offense involved a victim, or to a restitution fund. I understand that I shall be ordered to pay a mandatory restitution fine and a probation revocation restitution fine of the same amount if probation is revoked and not reinstated. I understand I must file a revised financial declaration if there is any balance unpaid on a restitution order or fine 120 days prior to release from probation. ☒ 13.
14. I understand that I may not be sentenced earlier than six (6) hours, nor later than five (5) days after my plea. I give up this right and agree to be sentenced at this time. ☒ 14.
15. **Immigration consequences:** (1) I understand that if I am not a U.S. citizen, this plea of Guilty/No Contest may, and for certain offenses will (see page 4), have the consequences of removal/deportation, exclusion from admission to the United States, and/or denial of naturalization pursuant to the laws of the U.S.; (2) I understand I have the right to request additional time to consider my plea in light of the advisement in this paragraph; (3) I have discussed my immigration status with my attorney and have had sufficient time to consider and discuss the immigration consequences of my plea with him/her or an immigration attorney. ☒ 15.
16. I understand that my plea of Guilty/No Contest in this case could result in revocation of my probation, mandatory supervision, post-release supervision, or parole in other cases and consecutive sentences. ☒ 16.

OTHER WAIVERS

17. **(Appeal Rights)** I give up my right to appeal the following: (a) denial of my 1538.5 motion, (b) issues related to strikes priors (under PC sections 667(b)-(i) and 1170.2); and (c) any sentence stipulated herein. ☒ 17.
18. **(Harvey Waiver)** The sentencing judge may consider my prior criminal history and the entire factual background of the case, including any unfiled, dismissed, or stricken charges or allegations or cases when granting probation, ordering restitution, or imposing sentence. ☒ 18.
19. **(Arbuckle Waiver)** I give up my right to be sentenced by the judge who accepts this plea. ☒ 19.
20. **(Evidence Disposal Waiver)** I give up my interest in all non-biological property/evidence impounded during the investigation of this case except all non-biological property and acknowledge that if I listed any property here, I must also file a claim with the impounding agency within 60 days after pronouncement of judgment or my ability to make a claim will expire. ☒ 20.

DEFENDANT

Chad Freeman

CASE NUMBER

CN 452348

PLEAS

21. I now plead Guilty/No Contest and admit the charges, convictions, and violations of probation described in paragraph #1, above, because I am guilty. I admit that on the dates charged, I (Describe facts as to each charge and allegation)

Cultivated more than 6 cannabis plants, engaged in a business without a Seller's Permit, and illegally sold fish for profit

I further agree that a duly appointed Commissioner or Temporary Judge may act as a Judge, accept this plea, impose sentence, and conduct any other post-conviction proceedings. I declare under penalty of perjury, under the laws of the State of California, that I have read, understood, and initialed each item above, and any attached addendum, and everything on the form and any attached addendum is true and correct.

Dated: 6-27-2024 Defendant's Signature: [Redacted]

Defendant's Address: [Redacted] City State Zip Code

Defendant's Telephone No.: [Redacted]

ATTORNEY'S STATEMENT

I, the attorney for the defendant in the above-entitled case, personally read and explained to the defendant the entire contents of this plea form and any addendum thereto. I discussed all charges and possible defenses with the defendant, and the consequences of this plea. I have asked the defendant about his/her immigration status, advised defendant of the immigration consequences of this plea to the best of my ability, and advised defendant of the right to additional time to discuss this matter with an immigration attorney. I personally observed the defendant fill in and initial each item, or read and initial each item to acknowledge his/her understanding and waivers. I observed the defendant date and sign this form and any addendum. I concur in the defendant's plea and waiver of constitutional rights.

Dated: 6-27-24 Michael Cortez Attorney for Defendant (Signature)
(Print Name) (Circle one: PD / APD / OAC / RETAINED)

INTERPRETER'S STATEMENT

I, the interpreter in this proceeding, having been duly sworn, truly translated this form, and any attached addendum, and all the questions therein to the defendant in the _____ language. The defendant indicated understanding of the contents of the form and then initialed and signed the form and any attached addendum.

Dated: _____ (Print Name) Court Interpreter (Signature)

PROSECUTOR'S STATEMENT

The People of the State of California, plaintiff in the above-entitled criminal case, by and through its attorney concurs with the defendant's plea of Guilty/No Contest as set forth above.

Dated: 6/27/24 Matthew Baylert Deputy District Attorney/Deputy City Attorney (Signature)
(Print Name)

COURT'S FINDING AND ORDER

The court, having questioned the defendant/defendant's attorney concerning the defendant's plea of Guilty/No Contest and admissions of the prior convictions and allegations, if any, finds that: the defendant understands and voluntarily and intelligently waives his/her constitutional rights; the defendant's plea and admissions are freely and voluntarily made; the defendant understands the nature of the charges and the consequences of the plea and admissions; and there is a factual basis for same. The court accepts the defendant's plea and admissions, and the defendant is convicted hereby.

Dated: 6/27/24 Judge/Commissioner of the Superior Court
Hon. Harry M. Elias

PLEA OF GUILTY/NO CONTEST - MISDEMEANOR

IMMIGRATION CONSEQUENCES

If you are not a U.S. citizen, you should consult your attorney or an immigration attorney about the immigration consequences of your plea, particularly if your offense might qualify as an "aggravated felony," crime of moral turpitude, controlled substance offense, firearm offense, or domestic violence offense (see below). It is your attorney's obligation to provide you with accurate and affirmative advice about the immigration consequences of your plea, and you have the right to additional time to evaluate those immigration consequences. By entering a plea, you are indicating to the court you know of and understand the specific immigration consequences that will result from your conviction.

Immigration consequences are a matter of federal law. Whether an offense qualifies as one of the "aggravated felonies" listed below is determined by federal statutes and case law. (See *Esquivel-Quintana v. Sessions* (2017) __ U.S. __, 137 S.Ct. 1562, 198 L.Ed.2d 22.) **Certain offenses defined as misdemeanors under State law may be considered "aggravated felonies" under federal law.**

Any conviction of a non-citizen for an "aggravated felony" **will** result in removal/deportation, exclusion, and/or denial of naturalization. (See 8 U.S.C. § 1227(a)(2)(A)(iii).) "Aggravated felonies" (see 8 U.S.C. § 1101(a)(43)) include but are not limited to:

- (1) Murder; rape; or sexual abuse of a minor;
- (2) A crime of violence, as defined in 18 U.S.C. § 16, but not including a purely political offense;*
- (3) Trafficking of a controlled substance, firearms, destructive devices or explosive materials;
- (4) Money laundering if the amount exceeds \$10,000;
- (5) An explosive materials offense;
- (6) A firearms offense;
- (7) A theft offense, including receipt of stolen property, or burglary offense;*
- (8) Child pornography;
- (9) Pimping, Pandering, or operating a prostitution business;
- (10) Human trafficking;
- (11) Fraud or deceit in which the loss to the victim or victims exceeds \$10,000;
- (12) Failure to appear by a defendant for service of a sentence if the underlying offense is punishable by imprisonment for a term of 5 years or more, or failure to appear to answer or resolve a felony for which a sentence of 2 years' imprisonment or more may be imposed;
- (13) Commercial bribery, counterfeiting, forgery, or trafficking in vehicles the identification numbers of which have been altered;*
- (14) Obstruction of justice, perjury or subornation of perjury, or bribery of a witness;*
- (15) An attempt or conspiracy to commit any of the above offenses.

*if the term of imprisonment is at least one year.

Other crimes (as defined by federal law) that may result in removal/deportation, exclusion, and/or denial of naturalization or other severe immigration consequences include, but are not limited to:

- (1) A crime of moral turpitude (see 8 U.S.C. §§ 1182(a)(2)(A)(i), 1227(a)(2)(A)(ii));
- (2) A controlled substance offense (see 8 U.S.C. §§ 1182(a)(2)(A)(i), 1182(a)(2)(C), 1227(a)(2)(B));
- (3) A firearm or destructive device offense (see 8 U.S.C. § 1227(a)(2)(C));
- (4) A domestic violence, stalking, or child abuse offense (see 8 U.S.C. § 1227(a)(2)(E)(i));
- (5) Violation of a protective order (see 8 U.S.C. § 1227(a)(2)(E)(ii));
- (6) A human trafficking offense (see 8 U.S.C. §§ 1182(a)(2)(H), 1227(a)(2)(F));
- (7) Multiple criminal convictions with an aggregate sentence of 5 years or more (see 8 U.S.C. § 1182(a)(2)(B));
- (8) A prostitution offense (see 8 U.S.C. § 1182(a)(2)(D));
- (9) A "serious criminal offense," which includes any felony, a crime of violence, and reckless driving or DUI with injury (see 8 U.S.C. § 1182(a)(2)(E)).



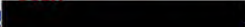
CLERK'S CERTIFICATE

The foregoing 4 page(s) is a true and correct copy of ☒ the original ☐ a copy on file with this office. It is ☒ the entire document ☐ an excerpt from a document.

Clerk of the Superior Court

06-12-2024

Date

by 

Deputy