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NEWS RELEASE

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Derrick Toste, a 46-year-old Eureka resident, pled guilty yesterday to four misdemeanor charges under the California Fish and Game Code: spotlighting deer, possessing a loaded rifle inside a vehicle, taking deer without a license, and littering within 150-feet of a state waterway.

On October 30, 2015, California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) wardens contacted Mr. Toste near the Eel River after observing him driving on a river bar while shining a high-powered light into adjacent woodlands and fields. The wardens also observed that Mr. Toste had littered the river bar with a shooting target container. On November 7, 2015, Fish and Wildlife wardens served a search warrant at Mr. Toste's residence, where the officers discovered additional evidence of spotlighting from GoPro footage, and also found deer meat taken without a license. Analysis of the deer meat by a CDFW forensic specialist revealed that Mr. Toste was in possession of meat from four different female deer.

Judge Christopher Wilson fined Mr. Toste \$2,945 and sentenced him to 3 years of probation with terms that included 200 hours of community service work, a prohibition on hunting, completion of a hunter safety program, and the forfeiture of three firearms, ammunition, buck knives, and the unlawfully possessed deer parts.

The prosecutor in the case, Deputy District Attorney Adrian Kamada, stated: "This case exemplifies the impressive effort of CDFW personnel to protect the wildlife resources of California."