



COUNTY OF YOLO

OFFICE OF THE DISTRICT ATTORNEY

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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\$75,135.00 Awarded to County in Restitution for Illegal Cockfighting Operation

(Woodland, CA) – June 16, 2014 – Yolo County District Attorney Jeff Reisig announced today that on June 13, 2014, Yolo County Superior Court Judge Daniel Maguire awarded \$75,135.00 to the County in restitution following convictions of an illegal cockfighting operation. On January 24, 2014, a Yolo County Jury convicted Lorenzo Ponce of Dunnigan on all charges arising out of an “underground” cockfighting ring operated by Ponce. On February 21, 2014, Judge Maguire sentenced 63-year-old Lorenzo Pena Ponce to 20 days county jail and three years summary probation for these crimes.

The District Attorney’s Office requested \$106,235.00 from Ponce for costs to the County for impoundment, care, and euthanasia of the birds taken from Ponce’s property. Ponce contested the amount at sentencing, and a restitution hearing was scheduled. In that hearing, a representative from the Sheriff’s Animal Control division testified the County incurred the loss as a result of housing and taking care of the birds for 60 days before they were lawfully euthanized. Judge Maguire awarded the county \$75,135.00 compensating for forty of the sixty days. Deputy District Attorney Barry Shapiro, who prosecuted the case, requested that Judge Maguire advise Ponce that he may not own or care for an animal for five years following his conviction.

The restitution will reimburse Sheriff Ed Prieto’s Animal Control Services division. “Cockfighting is inhumane and cruel to the roosters and is also a costly nuisance to any county,” said Prieto. “In addition to the time it takes to arrest, book and investigate the offenders, counties must impound and care for the birds until certain timelines are met and the birds are ultimately euthanized. We are pleased with the District Attorney’s efforts and the Judge’s order for restitution in this case.” Prieto concluded, “We hope this will send a clear message to anyone else out there before they consider cockfighting in Yolo County.”

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