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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Date: June 19, 2014 **Contact:** Jonathan Raven, Chief Deputy District Attorney
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Sacramento Men Convicted of Poaching Sturgeon

(Woodland, CA) - June 19, 2014 - Yolo County District Attorney Jeff Reisig announced that on June 18, 2014, a Yolo County jury convicted 41-year-old Nikolay Krasnodemskiy and 54-year-old Petr Dyachishin of multiple felony counts of sturgeon poaching. Both defendants are from Sacramento.

In February 2010, the Department of Fish and Wildlife wardens observed the defendants fishing at Horseshoe Bend in Yolo County. Due to the fact that Krasnodemskiy had a prior conviction for sturgeon poaching, the Department conducted several nights of surveillance on both defendants. During the investigation, the wardens believed the defendants were using juvenile salmon as an illegal bait. Wardens found that the defendants illegally caught a total of 18 sturgeons during a 10-day period. Pursuant to a search warrant on Dyachishin's residence, the Department of Fish and Wildlife recovered three sturgeons, approximately 30 pounds of sturgeon eggs, and caviar processing equipment. None of the sturgeons were properly tagged and the defendants' sturgeon report cards were not filled out as required by law.

During the trial, Deputy District Attorney Alvina Tzang educated the jury on the dangers of sturgeon poaching. She explained that poaching sturgeon can lead to the extinction of the species and affects the ecosystem. It adversely impacts tourism and other businesses. Poachers sell the products, such as caviar, at much lower prices in the black market. For example caviar may sell for \$1,200 per pound but poachers will sell the delicacy for \$100-\$150 per pound.

District Attorney Jeff Reisig praised the efforts of the Department of Fish and Wildlife. "This prosecution would not have been possible without the dedication and hard work of the Department of Fish and Wildlife wardens" said Reisig. "These wardens spend countless hours conducting surveillance and investigation in order to prevent poachers from exploiting the invaluable yet limited natural resources in California. This illegal activity impacts businesses because sturgeon poachers make a substantial profit by selling the meat and caviar in the black market at a discounted price."

Krasnodemskiy and Dyachishin will be sentenced on August 1, 2014 at 8:30 a.m in Department 3 by the Honorable Judge Stephen L. Mock.

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