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Eastern District of California

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**FORMER DEPARTMENT OF FORESTRY CAPTAIN PLEADS GUILTY TO
POSSESSION OF CHILD PORNOGRAPHY**
Defendant Agrees to 70-month Prison Term

FRESNO, Calif.—United States Attorney McGregor W. Scott announced today that EDWARD WRIGHT JONES, 47, of Exeter, Calif., pleaded guilty today before Senior United States District Judge Oliver W. Wanger to possession of child pornography. As part of his plea agreement, JONES agreed to a prison term of 70 months to be followed by a 10-year term of supervised release.

This case is the result of an investigation by the Fresno Internet Crimes Against Children Task Force, specifically the Tulare Police Department, the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) office in Fresno, and the Fresno County Sheriff's Department, Computer Crimes Unit.

The investigation in this case was undertaken as part of Project Safe Childhood (PSC). PSC is a United States Department of Justice initiative established to increase federal prosecutions of violent sexual predators of children and to reduce the number of Internet crimes against children including child pornography trafficking. As a part of PSC, the United States Attorney's Office has teamed with state and local agencies and organizations to increase law enforcement presence on the Internet, and to educate the public about safe Internet use, thereby reducing the risk that children might fall prey to online sexual predators. For additional information on the PSC initiative, please go to www.projectsafchildhood.gov or call the United

States Attorney's Office for the Eastern District of California and ask to speak with the PSC coordinator.

According to United States Attorney David Gappa, who is prosecuting the case, JONES came to the attention of law enforcement when a volunteer firefighter, who had worked with JONES at a fire station in Tulare, California, reported that he had seen images of naked children on a laptop computer that JONES had left on a desk at the fire station. A state search warrant was executed at JONES's residence, and his laptop computer was seized. A forensic examination of the computer revealed that it contained numerous still and video images of children as young as five years of age in appearance being sexually abused by adults. When JONES was questioned about the material on his computer, he admitted that he had used the peer-to-peer program Limewire to search for and save images of child pornography, and that he had attempted to hide the images on his computer. According to court documents, JONES stated in an interview with law enforcement officers that he had been a mentor in the Cal Fire Explorer program, which is intended to let high school-aged girls and boys learn more about careers in firefighting. He also stated that he had been a swim coach for school-age children for approximately 12 years.

JONES was remanded into custody today, and the court scheduled his sentencing for November 17, 2008, at 9:00 a.m.

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