

Briefly

End to gun-dumping studied

A request by an environmental group to discontinue the Sheriff's Office's practice of dumping confiscated guns in the ocean will be considered, Santa Cruz County Sheriff Al Noren said this morning.

"We'll look at it and see if we can find some other way," Noren said. "Maybe we can sell them and make some money."

Save Our Shores, of Santa Cruz, wrote to Noren last week and questioned the wisdom and legality of dumping guns in the ocean.

Noren said the Sheriff's Office has been dumping confiscated guns at sea for as long as he can remember. No exact figures were available, but deputies estimated between 50 and 75 guns are disposed of yearly. Some other police agencies give their confiscated guns to the sheriff for disposal.

Noren said it's hard to believe the gun-dumping is a big environmental issue "when the city of Santa Cruz dumps sewage in the bay. What about all the people who lose fishing weights out there?"

When the guns are dumped, Noren said, "the minnows live in the barrels."