

**UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
EASTERN DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA**

NELSON LOUIS THOMAS,

Plaintiff,

2:07-CV-2285-RLH (VPC)

vs.

MINUTES OF THE COURT

TOM DONAHUE, *et al.*,

Date: July 27, 2009

Defendants.

_____ /

PRESENT:

THE HONORABLE VALERIE P. COOKE, UNITED STATES MAGISTRATE JUDGE

DEPUTY CLERK: LISA MANN REPORTER: NONE APPEARING

COUNSEL FOR PLAINTIFF: NONE APPEARING

COUNSEL FOR DEFENDANTS: NONE APPEARING

MINUTE ORDER IN CHAMBERS: XXX

This is a civil rights action brought by *pro se* prisoner plaintiff Nelson Louis Thomas. Plaintiff has moved for appointment of counsel (#14).

A litigant in a civil rights action does not have a Sixth Amendment right to appointed counsel. *Storseth v. Spellman*, 654 F.2d 1349, 1353 (9th Cir. 1981). In very limited circumstances, federal courts are empowered to request an attorney to represent an indigent civil litigant. The circumstances in which a court will make such a request, however, are exceedingly rare, and the court will make the request under only extraordinary circumstances. *United States v. 30.64 Acres of Land*, 795 F.2d 796, 799-800 (9th Cir. 1986); *Wilborn v. Escalderon*, 789 F.2d 1328, 1331 (9th Cir. 1986). A finding of such exceptional circumstances requires that the court evaluate both the likelihood of success on the merits and the *pro se* litigant's ability to articulate his claims in light of the complexity of the legal issues involved. Neither factor is controlling; both must be viewed together in making the finding. *Terrell v. Brewer*, 935 F.2d 1015, 1017 (9th Cir. 1991), *citing Wilborn, supra*, 789 F.2d at 1331. The court exercises discretion in making this finding.

