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UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT  
FOR THE EASTERN DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA

SCOTT JOHNSON,  
Plaintiff,  
v.  
DARLENE RAE DOWNES, et al.,  
Defendants.

No. 2:14-cv-1256-TLN-KJN

ORDER

Pending before the court is plaintiff's motion for discovery sanctions. (ECF No. 10.) In an attempt to avoid the accumulation of attorneys' fees through potentially unnecessary motion practice and hearings, the court orders the parties to first meet and confer to explore settlement, and finds it appropriate to also schedule a settlement conference in this matter.

Accordingly, IT IS HEREBY ORDERED that:

1. No later than September 15, 2015, the parties shall meet and confer, at a minimum by telephone, to explore potential settlement of the case.
2. If the parties are unable to reach a settlement through their own efforts, the parties shall file, no later than September 15, 2015, a joint statement, signed by counsel for all parties, outlining: (a) when and where the meet-and-confer session took place; (b) who was present; (c) whether the parties are amenable to having a settlement

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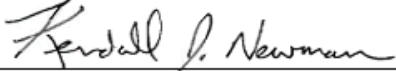
conference conducted before the assigned magistrate judge and agree to waive any disqualification by virtue of the assigned magistrate judge also acting as the settlement judge; and (d) if agreeable to a settlement conference before the assigned magistrate judge, proposed dates for the settlement conference that have been cleared with the undersigned's courtroom deputy clerk. If the parties do not agree to waive disqualification, the court will refer the case for a settlement conference before another magistrate judge.

3. Upon review of the parties' joint statement, the court will schedule the settlement proceedings.

4. The motion for discovery sanctions (ECF No. 10) is denied without prejudice to its refiling after the settlement conference, if necessary.

IT IS SO ORDERED.

Dated: September 1, 2015

  
KENDALL J. NEWMAN  
UNITED STATES MAGISTRATE JUDGE