



Department of Justice

United States Attorney A. Brian Albritton
Middle District of Florida

Tampa	Orlando	Jacksonville	Ocala	Fort Myers
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE			CONTACT: STEVE COLE	
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http://www.usdoj.gov/usao/flm/pr			FAX: (813) 274-6300	

HUDSON MAN SENTENCED FOR KILLING BALD EAGLE

Tampa, Florida - U.S. Attorney A. Brian Albritton announces that U.S. District Judge Steven D. Merryday today sentenced Jesse Tyrone Barresse (age 33, of Hudson) to 6 months in federal prison for shooting and killing a bald eagle. Barresse was also ordered to pay \$500 in restitution to the North American Wetlands Conservation Account. Barresse had pleaded guilty on March 5, 2009, to violating the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act, a federal law which protects eagles, their nests and young.

According to court documents, Barresse shot the bald eagle on January 13, 2008, in Ruskin. He killed the bald eagle even though he recognized it as a bald eagle and knew that it was illegal to kill it. After he shot the eagle, Barresse bragged about the killing to several individuals. During a subsequent interview with federal agents, he first claimed he thought he had shot an osprey, another federally protected species.

Bald eagles were brought back from the brink of extinction through efforts to ban the use of the pesticide DDT, which was damaging the eagles' eggs, and through the protection afforded by the Endangered Species Act. De-listed as an endangered species in July 2007, the Bald Eagle is an American success story and a victory for the Act. It remains a protected species under both United States and Florida Law.

Andrew Aloise, Resident Agent in Charge for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service,

said, "We will vigorously pursue those who kill or injure our nation's symbol."

This case was investigated by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, with assistance from the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, the U.S. Marshals Service, the U.S. Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives, and the Hillsborough County Sheriffs Office. It was prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney Cherie L. Krigsman.