

For Immediate Release
April 25, 2011

**FORMER CORRECTIONS OFFICER PLEADS GUILTY TO
FEDERAL RECEIPT OF CHILD PORNOGRAPHY OFFENSE**
[CORRECTED]

ALBUQUERQUE – This morning in federal court in Albuquerque, **Stephen Hensley**, a 42-year-old resident of Tucumcari, New Mexico, entered a guilty plea to receipt of a visual depiction of a minor engaged in sexually explicit conduct under a plea agreement with the United States Attorney's Office. Hensley faces a term of imprisonment of not less than five years and up to 20 years to be followed by a lifetime of supervised release at sentencing. Hensley also will be required to register as a sex offender after he completes his prison sentence. At the conclusion of today's plea hearing, Hensley was remanded into the custody of the U.S. Marshal's Service and will be detained pending his sentencing hearing, which has yet to be set.

United States Attorney Kenneth J. Gonzales said that the New Mexico State Police (NMSP) initiated an investigation into Hensley in January 2010 after his Internet Protocol Address (IP) was identified as one which was offering child pornography images through a peer-to-peer file-sharing program. Hensley was employed as a corrections officer at the Quay County Detention Center at the time the NMSP commenced its investigation. As a result of that investigation, on December 15, 2010, a federal grand jury returned a four-count indictment charging Hensley with two counts of receipt of visual depictions of minors engaged in sexually explicit conduct; and two counts of possession of child pornography. During today's plea hearing, Hensley entered a guilty plea to count 1 of the indictment. Under the terms of the plea agreement, the remaining counts of the indictment will be dismissed after Hensley is sentenced.

In his plea agreement, Hensley acknowledged that, on July 1, 2010, the NMSP executed a search warrant at his residence and seized his computer and computer-related media. The

search warrant was based on information obtained during a NMSP's investigation that identified his IP address as one associated with users involved in child pornography. The plea agreement states that Hensley voluntarily submitted to a tape-recorded interview with NMSP officer during which he admitted using the peer-to-peer file-sharing program of Limewire to download child pornography and that he had images and videos of child pornography on his computer.

In his plea agreement, Hensley acknowledged that a forensic examination of his computer and computer-related media uncovered hundreds of image files and video files of child pornography. Hensley also acknowledged that the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children determined that the child pornography images found on his computers and computer-related media included 80 images of 31 children who have been identified as child pornography victims and have been rescued, and 31 videos of 22 children who have been identified as child pornography victims and have been rescued.

The case was investigated by the NMSP, and is being prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney Charlyn E. Rees. The case was brought as part of Project Safe Childhood, a nationwide initiative launched in May 2006 by the Department of Justice (DOJ) to combat the growing epidemic of child sexual exploitation and abuse. Led by United States Attorneys' Offices and DOJ's Criminal Division's Child Exploitation and Obscenity Section, Project Safe Childhood marshals federal, state and local resources to better locate, apprehend and prosecute individuals who exploit children via the Internet, as well as to identify and rescue victims. For more information about Project Safe Childhood, please visit www.projectsafechildhood.gov.

The case also was brought as part of the New Mexico Internet Crimes Against Children Task Force's (ICAC Task Force) mission to locate, track, and capture Internet child sexual predators and Internet child pornographers in New Mexico. There are 61 federal, state and local

law enforcement agencies associated with the ICAC Task Force, which is funded by a grant administered by the NMAGO. Anyone with information relating to suspected child predators and suspected child abuse is encouraged to contact federal or local law enforcement.

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