

For Immediate Release
November 16, 2011

**KEWA PUEBLO MAN PLEADS GUILTY TO VIOLATING
BALD AND GOLDEN EAGLE PROTECTION ACT**

ALBUQUERQUE – Earlier today in federal court, **Martin Aguilar**, 47, a member of the Kewa Pueblo, formerly known as Santo Domingo Pueblo, pled guilty to violating the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act under a plea agreement with the U.S. Attorney's Office. U.S. Attorney Kenneth J. Gonzales said that Aguilar entered guilty pleas to Counts 2 and 3 of a four-count indictment that was filed on November 10, 2010, and charged Aguilar with (1) the unlawful bartering of a golden eagle on April 27, 2009; (2) the unlawful taking of a bald eagle on February 6, 2010; (3) the unlawful possession of a bald eagle on February 12, 2010; and (4) the unlawful possession of a migratory bird, a red-tailed hawk, on February 12, 2010.

Aguilar faces a maximum penalty of one year imprisonment, one year of supervised release and a \$100,000 fine on Count 2, and a maximum penalty of two years imprisonment, one year of supervised release and a \$250,000 fine on Count 3. He remains on conditions of release pending his sentencing date, which has yet to be scheduled.

In his plea agreement, Aguilar admitted that, on February 6, 2010, when he and his son went to the bosque on pueblo lands to collect wood, they spotted two bald eagles. Aguilar shot one of the eagles and his son shot the other. Aguilar took the bald eagles to his home where he removed the feathers from the eagles and kept the feathers in his home. On February 12, 2010, Aguilar told agents of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service that he and his son had killed the eagles and that their feathers were located at his house. Aguilar acknowledged that he had not applied for or obtained permission to kill, take or possess a bald eagle from the U.S. Secretary of the Interior as required by the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act. Aguilar further admitted that

he is a medicine man at the Santo Domingo Pueblo, and that he has shot and killed five bald eagles since 1992.

Aguilar entered his guilty pleas conditioned on the reservation of his right to have the Tenth Circuit Court of Appeals review the U.S. District Court's November 7, 2011 Orders denying Aguilar's Motion to Suppress and Motion to Dismiss.

This case was investigated by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Services, and is being prosecuted by Supervisory Assistant U.S. Attorney Fred J. Federici.

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