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News Release

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Red Lake man indicted for sexually abusing a woman

A 29-year-old Red Lake man was indicted today in federal court in St. Paul for sexually abusing a woman while on the Red Lake Indian Reservation. The indictment charges Douglas Wayne Tarnow with one count of aggravated sexual abuse.

The indictment alleges that on January 31, 2011, Tarnow caused the woman to engage in a sexual act by using force. According to a law enforcement affidavit filed in the case, Tarnow purportedly coerced the woman to meet him at his aunt's residence on January 30, 2011.

At 9:30 p.m., the woman arrived at the residence, and she and Tarnow began arguing. During the course of that argument, Tarnow allegedly grabbed the woman and threw her to the ground approximately ten times. At 3:00 a.m., he reportedly forced her to perform a sexual act and, later, forced her to have sex with him.

If convicted, Tarnow faces a potential maximum penalty of life in prison. All sentences will be determined by a federal district court judge. Tarnow remains in custody on this charge.

This case is the result of an investigation by the Federal Bureau of Investigation and the Red Lake Tribal Police Department, with assistance from the Beltrami County Sheriff's Office. It is being prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney Clifford B. Wardlaw.

Because the Red Lake Indian Reservation is a federal-jurisdiction reservation, some of the crimes that occur there are investigated by the FBI in conjunction with the Red Lake Tribal Police Department. Those cases are prosecuted by the U.S. Attorney's Office.

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An indictment is a determination by a grand jury that there is probable cause to believe that offenses have been committed by a defendant. A defendant, of course, is presumed innocent until he or she pleads guilty or is proven guilty at trial.

