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News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Wednesday, May 4, 2011
WWW.JUSTICE.GOV/USAO/MN

Felon pleads guilty to possessing ten firearms

Earlier today in federal court in Duluth, a 29-year-old felon from Red Lake pleaded guilty to possessing ten firearms. Michael Vernon Lussier pleaded guilty to one count of being a felon in possession of a firearm. Lussier, who was indicted on January 11, 2011, entered his plea before United States District Court Chief Judge Michael J. Davis.

In his plea agreement, Lussier admitted that on May 16, 2010, he possessed the firearms, which included an assortment of assault-type long guns, shotguns, and rifles. The weapons were seized during an executed search warrant of his residence on the Red Lake Indian Reservation.

Because he is a felon, Lussier cannot legally possess firearms or ammunition at any time. His prior convictions include a 2003 Roseau County case for felony possession of stolen property.

For the federal crime to which he has now pleaded guilty, Lussier faces a potential maximum penalty of ten years in prison. Judge Davis will determine his sentence at a future hearing, yet to be scheduled.

This case is the result of an investigation by the U.S. Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives, the Paul Bunyan Drug Task Force, and the Red Lake Tribal Police Department. It is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Allen A. Slaughter.

Note, this case is part of Project Safe Neighborhoods ("PSN"), an initiative launched by the U.S. Justice Department in 2001 to promote a multi-jurisdictional, comprehensive approach to reducing gun crime in America. PSN provides resources to strengthen law enforcement and crime prevention partnerships that work to make our streets and communities safer.

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