



Department of Justice

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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ROBBINSVILLE MAN SENTENCED IN U. S. DISTRICT COURT

Felon Sentenced to 16 Years Following Entry of Guilty Plea in Federal Court

BRYSON CITY, NC - Gretchen C.F. Shappert, United States Attorney, for the Western District of North Carolina, announced that on June 29, 2006, NATHANIEL DAVID BIRCHFIELD, of Robbinsville, North Carolina, was sentenced in federal court in Bryson City to 192 months (16 years) imprisonment for violating federal firearms laws. Federal sentences are served without the possibility of parole.

Receiving the sentence from United States District Judge Lacy Thornburg was Nathaniel David Birchfield, 40, formerly of Star Route Box 135, Robbinsville, NC. Birchfield has been in federal custody since December 28, 2005.

Assistant U. S. Attorney Donald Gast, who handled the case for the government, stated Birchfield was indicted December 5, 2005, in U. S. District Court for the Western District of North Carolina on four counts alleging that on November 4, 1996, the defendant was a felon in possession of a firearm and ammunition, as well as unlawful use of a controlled substance, methamphetamine.

According to statements made in court, Birchfield is a known poacher in the Great Smoky Mountains National Park and in the Nantahala National Forest. On January 27, 2006, Birchfield abandoned an eight point white-tailed deer mount to the Fish and Wildlife Service. This deer

was unlawfully killed in the Great Smoky Mountains National Park. Additionally, while in possession of the illegal firearm, Birchfield shot a dog for target practice.

U.S. Attorney Shappert noted the outstanding cooperative efforts of the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives and stated, “The federal armed career penalties are tailor-made for repeat offenders like Mr. Birchfield. Clearly, he will not be using helpless animals for target practice anymore.”

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United States v. Nathaniel David Birchfield
Docket No.: 2:05CR225