



Department of Justice

United States Attorney David E. Nahmias
Northern District of Georgia

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CONTACT: Patrick Crosby

(404)581-6016

FAX (404)581-6160

**EX-DIRECTOR OF BERRY'S LAND RESOURCES DEPARTMENT AND
A LOCAL TIMBER BROKER ARRAIGNED ON FRAUD, MONEY
LAUNDERING CHARGES**

Both plead not guilty to charges stemming from theft of Berry's timber

Rome, GA - David E. Nahmias, United States Attorney for the Northern District of Georgia, and Gregory Jones, Special Agent in Charge, Federal Bureau of Investigation, today announced the arraignment of ROBERT LEE PARKER, 54, of Rome, Georgia, and RUSSELL DAVID BAIN, 56, of Cedar Bluff, Alabama, before United States Magistrate Judge Walter E. Johnson. PARKER and BAIN pleaded not guilty to charges of conspiracy to defraud Berry College, conspiracy to launder money, and also to substantive money laundering charges. PARKER entered a not guilty plea to additional charges of interstate transportation of stolen timber, possessing and receiving stolen property, and to an additional count of money laundering.

According to United States Attorney Nahmias, the charges and other information presented in court, beginning on or about 1995 and continuing until 2001, PARKER and BAIN hatched and executed a scheme steal timber from Berry's land. Unbeknownst to Berry, PARKER, who was the Director of Land Resources during that time period, permitted BAIN and his now-defunct timber company, North Georgia Forest Products, to harvest timber off of Berry's land without paying Berry for the timber removed and sold to wood mills. On the rare occasion Berry received money for timber, the BAIN paid amounts that were substantially below the fair market value of the timber. In exchange for allowing BAIN to remove Berry's timber at such a discounted price, BAIN paid kickbacks to PARKER personally, and made payments to third-parties on behalf of PARKER, such as, to PARKER's interior decorator.

United States Attorney David E. Nahmias stated, "To their shock and dismay, the members of the Berry College community learned that Parker had grossly abused his position as the head of Berry's Land Resources Department to enrich himself and his co-conspirator David Bain. Such betrayal of trust and unlawful self-enrichment are the anthesis of the values that Berry tries to teach its students.

On March 21, 2006, a Federal Grand Jury charged PARKER and BAIN with conspiracy to defraud Berry College, conspiracy to launder illegal proceeds, and two counts of money laundering. Indictment also charges PARKER with interstate transportation of stolen property, receipt of stolen property, and another count of money laundering. The money laundering charges, and the charges related to the interstate transportation, possession, and receipt of stolen property carry a maximum sentence of 10 years in prison for each count. The conspiracy to defraud charge carries a maximum sentence of 5 years in prison. The defendants also face a fine of up to \$ 250,000 for each count of the indictment.

This case is being investigated by Special Agent Gary Will of the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

Assistant United States Attorney BJay Pak is prosecuting the case.

Members of the public are reminded that the indictment contains only allegations. A defendant is presumed innocent of the charges and it will be the government's burden to prove a defendant's guilt beyond a reasonable doubt at trial.

For further information please contact David E. Nahmias (pronounced NAH-me-us), United States Attorney or William L. McKinnon, Chief, Economic Crime and Cybercrime, through Patrick Crosby, Public Affairs Officer, U.S. Attorney's Office, at (404) 581-6016. The Internet address for the HomePage for the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Northern District of Georgia is www.usdoj.gov/usao/gan.