



**PRESS RELEASE**

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**For Immediate Release**

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**PINEDALE, N.M., MAN PLEADS GUILTY  
TO MURDERING GIRLFRIEND**

ALBUQUERQUE – This morning in Albuquerque federal court, Mac Arthur Cooke, 37, a member of the Navajo Nation who resides in Pinedale, N.M., entered a guilty plea to an indictment charging him with second degree murder under a plea agreement with the U.S. Attorney's Office.

Under the terms of the plea agreement, Cooke will be sentenced to 14 years of imprisonment to be followed by up to five years of supervised release. Cooke has been in federal custody since his arrest on Feb. 9, 2012, and remains detained pending his sentencing hearing, which has not yet been scheduled.

U.S. Attorney Kenneth J. Gonzales said that Cooke pled guilty to killing Vivian Watson, a 29-year-old Navajo woman, on Jan. 13, 2012, in Vanderwagen, N.M., which is located within the Navajo Indian Reservation. According to court filings, Cooke used an axe to kill Ms. Watson, his girlfriend of two years. In entering his guilty plea, Cooke admitted that, during an argument with Ms. Watson, he killed her by deliberately hitting her in the head with an axe.

Assistant U.S. Attorney Jacob Wishard is prosecuting the case, which was investigated by the FBI with assistance from the Navajo Nation Department of Public Safety, Crownpoint Division.

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