



PRESS RELEASE

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**RUIDOSO MAN PLEADS GUILTY TO FEDERAL
CHILD PORNOGRAPHY CHARGE**

*Plea Agreement Requires 22 Year Prison Sentence
to be Followed by Lifetime of Supervised Release*

ALBUQUERQUE – This morning in federal court, Justin Gray, 34, of Ruidoso, N.M., pled guilty to a receipt of a visual depiction of a minor child engaged in sexually explicit conduct charge under a plea agreement with the U.S. Attorney’s Office. U.S. Attorney Kenneth J. Gonzales said that the plea agreement requires that Gray be sentenced to 22 years of imprisonment to be followed by a lifetime of supervised release. Gray also will be required to register as a sex offender.

Gray was indicted on July 13, 2011, in a six-count indictment charging him with three counts of distribution and attempted distribution of visual depictions of minors engaged in sexually explicit conduct; one count of receipt of visual depiction of a minor engaged in sexually explicit conduct; and two counts of possession of matter containing visual depictions of minors engaged in sexually explicit conduct. According to the indictment, Gray distributed child pornography in Oct. 2010, Nov. 2010 and Feb. 2011; received child pornography in Sept. 2010; and possessed child pornography in March 2011.

Gray was arrested on Sept. 12, 2011, and has been in federal custody since that time. Gray will remain detained pending his sentencing hearing, which has yet to be scheduled.

According to Gray’s plea agreement, the New Mexico Attorney General’s Office (NMAGO) executed a search warrant at Gray’s home on March 22, 2011, after receiving a tip from the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children (NCMEC) that a person in New Mexico was using an IP Address to transmit child pornography and determining that the IP Address was subscribed to Gray’s residence. A forensic examination of a computer and computer-related media seized from Gray’s residence revealed that they contained over 15,000 images and over 150 videos of child pornography. The NCMEC determined that the child pornography images and videos found on Gray’s computers and computer-related media included 572 child pornography images of 44 children who have been identified as child

pornography victims and have been rescued and 30 child pornography videos of seven children who have been identified as child pornography victims and have been rescued.

In his plea agreement, Gray acknowledged that, in March 2011, he voluntarily participated in a recorded interview with NMAGO agents during which he admitted that he used his computer to receive images of naked children under the age of 12; that he had a prior conviction for child pornography; and that he was addicted to this activity.

Court records reflect that, prior to his arrest in this case, Gray previously had been convicted of (1) criminal sexual contact with a minor in 2000 in the 13th Judicial District Court (Valencia County); (2) criminal sexual penetration of a minor in 2000 in the 11th Judicial District Court (San Juan County); and (3) sexual exploitation of children in 2009 in the 1st Judicial District Court (Santa Fe County).

Gray was charged in this case based on an investigation by the NMAGO, the Federal Bureau of Investigation and Homeland Security Investigation, and is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Charlyn E. Rees.

This case was brought as part of Project Safe Childhood, a nationwide initiative launched in May 2006 by the Department of Justice to combat the growing epidemic of child sexual exploitation and abuse. Led by U.S. Attorneys' Offices and the Criminal Division's Child Exploitation and Obscenity Section, Project Safe Childhood marshals federal, state and local resources to better locate, apprehend and prosecute individuals who exploit children via the Internet, as well as to identify and rescue victims. For more information about Project Safe Childhood, please visit www.projectsafechildhood.gov.

The case also was brought as part of the New Mexico Internet Crimes Against Children Task Force whose mission it is to locate, track, and capture Internet child sexual predators and Internet child pornographers in New Mexico. There are 64 federal, state and local law enforcement agencies associated with the Task Force, which is funded by a grant administered by the NMAGO. Anyone with information relating to suspected child predators and suspected child abuse is encouraged to contact federal or local law enforcement.

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