



October 28, 2009

## **VERMONT MAN SENTENCED IN FIREARMS CASE**

The Office of the United States Attorney for the District of Vermont stated that Mark H. Andrews, 48, from Bennington, Vermont was sentenced on October 26, 2009 to four months in prison after his guilty plea to charges that he possessed a firearm as a convicted felon. Chief United States District Judge William K. Sessions III also sentenced Andrews to two years of supervised release, which will include four months of home confinement.

According to court records, between approximately February 5, 2008 and November 23, 2008, Andrews possessed a 12-gauge shotgun equipped with a laser sight. In 2005, Andrews was convicted in the State of New York for attempted possession of marijuana, a felony. Because he is a convicted felon, federal law prohibits Andrews from possessing a firearm. Andrews possessed the shotgun in connection with a deer hunting camp that he had illegally built in the National Forest in Peru, Vermont. While constructing the camp, Andrews damaged a portion of an historic stone wall. Under Vermont law, it is illegal to use artificial lights, such as the laser sight Andrews possessed, to hunt deer and other big game.

Under the United States Sentencing Guidelines, which are now advisory, Andrews faced a 15-21 month prison term. Judge Sessions granted a lesser sentence based in part on what the Court found to be the defendant's history of employment and his lack of a serious criminal record.

United States Attorney Tristram J. Coffin commended law enforcement officers from the U.S. Forest Service and the Vermont Fish and Wildlife Department for their hard work on this matter. The prosecutor is Assistant United States Attorney Timothy C. Doherty, Jr. Andrews is represented by Assistant Public Defender Alison S. Arms.

The United States Attorney noted that this prosecution is part of the U.S. Department of Justice's Project Safe Neighborhood, a nationwide commitment to reduce gun crime in America. Led by the U.S. Attorney's Office and the Bureau of Alcohol Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives, Project Safe Neighborhood marshals federal, state and local resources to better locate, apprehend, and prosecute individuals who violate federal gun laws. For more information about Project Safe Neighborhood and Project Safe Vermont, please visit: [www.psn.gov](http://www.psn.gov).