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**NICHOLAS COUNTY MAN PLEADS GUILTY TO ILLEGAL GUN POSSESSION AND
MONEY LAUNDERING CHARGES**

CHARLESTON, W.Va. – Jerry Lee Hanna, 55, of Nettie, W.Va., pleaded guilty yesterday before United States District Judge Thomas E. Johnston to being a felon in possession of firearms and money laundering. Court records revealed that Hanna was a member of an oxycodone distribution ring operating in and around Nicholas County from 2007 through September 2008. During that time Hanna used the cash proceeds obtained from drug trafficking to purchase tracts of real property which were titled in the name of a third party.

A joint investigation was conducted by members of the Central West Virginia Drug and Violent Crimes Task Force along with investigators from the Federal Bureau of Investigation and the Internal Revenue Service. On June 25, 2009, investigators executed a search warrant on a Nicholas County residence where they seized approximately 79 firearms and other items. Hanna admitted to storing approximately 24 firearms at the residence in March 2009. The defendant had been previously convicted of conspiracy to distribute marijuana in U.S. District Court in February 2001.

Hanna faces up to 20 years in prison and a fine of up to \$500,000 when he is sentenced on April 27, 2011. He is also forfeiting two pieces of real property, \$9,000 cash and his interest in more than 40 firearms.

Assistant United States Attorney Joshua Hanks is handling the prosecution.

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