



**R. Booth Goodwin II, United States Attorney
Southern District of West Virginia**

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CONTACT: Melvin Smith
800-659-8726*(304)345-2200
Melvin.Smith@usdoj.gov

**NICHOLAS COUNTY MAN SENTENCED TO ALMOST FOUR YEARS IN PRISON ON ILLEGAL GUN
POSSESSION AND MONEY LAUNDERING CHARGES**

CHARLESTON, W.Va. – Jerry Lee Hanna, 55, of Nettie, Nicholas County, West Virginia, was sentenced to 46 months in prison by United States District Judge Thomas E. Johnston on possession of firearms by a convicted felon and money laundering charges. When he pled guilty to the charges in January, Hanna admitted that he was a member of an oxycodone distribution enterprise operating in and around Nicholas County from 2007 through September 2008. Hanna further admitted that on or about April 28, 2008, he used cash proceeds obtained from drug trafficking to purchase approximately 24 acres of real property. The defendant subsequently had the deed to the property directed to a third party, in order to conceal the nature, source and ownership of the property and the cash he used to complete the purchase.

Hanna also admitted that on or about September 30, 2008, he used drug trafficking proceeds to purchase approximately 9 acres of unimproved hunting property located in Nicholas County. Hanna further admitted to convincing the seller of the property to list the price as \$7,000 on the deed, which was well below the \$20,000 purchase price listed for the property. The defendant also admitted to having the deed drafted to reflect a title transfer from the seller to a third party to conceal ownership of the property. Despite the deeds bearing a third party's name, Hanna admitted that he maintained control and access to both tracts of property that were purchased in April 2008 and September 2008.

On June 25, 2009, investigators executed a search warrant at a Craigs ville, Nicholas County residence where they seized approximately 79 firearms and other items. Hanna admitted that he stored 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 and had not had his civil right to possess a firearm restored.

As a result of today's conviction, the defendant will forfeit two pieces of real property, \$9,000 cash and his interest in more than 40 firearms.

An 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.

Assistant United States Attorney Joshua Hanks handled the prosecution.

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