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**BUTTE COUNTY WOMAN CHARGED WITH  
FAILURE TO APPEAR FOR SERVICE OF FEDERAL SENTENCE**

SACRAMENTO--United States Attorney McGregor W. Scott announced today that former Butte County resident Lorraine Ann BLANTON, 53, was charged with felony failure to surrender to federal authorities for service of a federal sentence of imprisonment as ordered by United States District Court Judge Edward J. Garcia.

According to district court documents, on December 11, 2003, BLANTON was charged in a federal indictment with three counts of felony possession of stolen U.S. mail and three counts of felony bank fraud. BLANTON was arrested on the charges and subsequently released from custody pending further proceedings in the case. At the time of her release, BLANTON was advised by the federal court of her obligation to appear at all proceedings and to surrender for service of any sentence imposed.

According to Assistant United States Attorney Michelle Rodriguez, who is prosecuting the case, on January 23, 2004, BLANTON pled guilty to the three felony counts of possession of stolen U.S. mail. On July 16, 2004, she was sentenced to four months in prison. At the conclusion of the sentencing hearing, Judge Garcia -- at BLANTON's request-- allowed BLANTON to self-surrender to federal authorities to commence her prison sentence on September 2, 2004. The federal indictment returned by the grand jury today charges that BLANTON failed to surrender for commencement of her federal sentence as ordered by Judge Garcia.

If convicted, BLANTON faces up to five years imprisonment, a \$250,000 fine, and a 3 year term of supervision. Any sentence BLANTON receives for her failure to appear must run consecutive to her 4 month federal sentence for possession of stolen U.S. mail.

The possession of stolen U.S. mail case was investigated by the United States Postal Inspection Service. The failure to appear case against BLANTON was investigated by the United States Marshal for the Eastern District of California.

The United States Attorney's Office notes that the indictment on file contains only accusations, and that defendant BLANTON is presumed innocent until and unless proven guilty beyond a reasonable doubt.

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