

PRESS RELEASE

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Madison, Wisconsin -- Erik C. Peterson, United States Attorney for the Western District of Wisconsin, announced that Wayne Ruoho, 41, Baldwin, Wis., was sentenced today by Chief U.S. District Judge Barbara B. Crabb to 28 years in prison, without parole. Ruoho previously pleaded guilty to a charge that he conspired to distribute methamphetamine over a several year period in the Western District of Wisconsin.

In sentencing Ruoho, Chief Judge Crabb stated that it "boggles the mind" to think of the amount of methamphetamine involved in Ruoho's crimes. She also told Ruoho that "it must be hard to sleep knowing the number of lives you have ruined."

Ruoho conspired from September 2001 to the end of December 2004 to distribute, and possess with the intent to distribute, methamphetamine. Ruoho traveled with co-conspirators from Minnesota to California, transporting large amounts of U.S. currency to obtain multi-pound quantities of methamphetamine; large quantities of methamphetamine obtained in California were then transported to Minnesota for distribution by Ruoho and his partners in various locations, including Minnesota and Wisconsin.

Ruoho utilized couriers to deliver methamphetamine, and personally delivered

methamphetamine, to his co-conspirators for distribution in the Western District of Wisconsin. Angela Trudelle, formerly of Washburn County, Wisconsin, distributed Ruoho's methamphetamine to customers in various counties in the Western District of Wisconsin, including Washburn and Barron Counties. Michele and Timothy Nelson also distributed Ruoho's methamphetamine to customers in various Wisconsin counties, including St. Croix, Pierce, and Dunn Counties. Angela Trudelle, Michele and Timothy Nelson have been convicted, sentenced, and are serving lengthy sentences in federal prison.

U.S. Attorney Peterson stated that this guilty plea is the result of a long-term investigation conducted by the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the Wisconsin Department of Justice, Division of Criminal Investigation-Narcotics Bureau, the Minnesota Bureau of Criminal Apprehension, the St. Croix County Sheriff's Department, the Washburn County Sheriff's Department, and the Barron County Sheriff's Department. In addition to Timothy Nelson (100 months), Michele Nelson (262 months), and Angela Trudelle (119 months), Lawrence Bauer (262 months), Terry Mortier (135 months), Richard Holland (170 months), Jamie Briesemeister (121 months), and Reanne Taylor (180 months) have all been convicted and sentenced to federal prison as a result of their involvement in this methamphetamine conspiracy. Prosecution of these cases have been handled by Assistant U.S. Attorney John W. Vaudreuil.

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