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**LAS VEGAS MAN PLEADS GUILTY TO THE ATTEMPTED UNLAWFUL
SALE OF VENOMOUS REPTILES OVER THE INTERNET**

LAS VEGAS - - A Las Vegas man who possessed poisonous snakes and reptiles at his home in Las Vegas pleaded guilty today to attempting to sell poisonous snakes and other venomous reptiles over the internet, announced Gregory A. Brower, United States Attorney for the District of Nevada.

Cody Brett Bartolini, 21, pleaded guilty to three misdemeanor counts of Attempted Unlawful Sale of Wildlife, and is scheduled to be sentenced on April 22, 2007, by U.S. District Judge Robert C. Jones.

"This case represents a significant achievement on the part of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in protecting the public by seizing these extremely dangerous reptiles which were being housed in our community," said U.S. Attorney Brower. "The U.S. Attorney's Office will prosecute individuals who violate federal fish and wildlife laws, and will assist the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in their continuing mission to ensure that wildlife is possessed legally, under safe and humane conditions, and only by properly-trained individuals."

The Federal Lacey Act is violated where an individual sells or offers to sell wildlife across state lines where the wildlife has been received, acquired, or possessed in violation of any underlying state or federal law. Beginning in 2005, Bartolini, operating under the name "mojavereptiles," began placing advertisements on "Venomousreptiles.org," a website dedicated to reptile enthusiasts. From his home in Nevada, Bartolini offered to trade and sell non-indigenous venomous and indigenous venomous reptiles across the internet in violation of Nevada state law. The illegally-possessed venomous snakes Bartolini offered to sell or trade included baby Green Mambas, Forest Cobras, Black-Neck Spitting Cobras, Mojave Sidewinder Rattlesnakes, Southwestern Speckled Rattlesnakes, and Great Basin Rattlesnakes.

On March 9, 2007, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Agents executed a federal search warrant at Bartolini's residence in Las Vegas, where they seized 48 snakes of various species, including but not limited to: Tanzanian Black Mambas, Green Mambas, King Cobras, Forest Cobras, Tiapans, Banded Egyptian Cobras, Gaboon Vipers, West African Bush Vipers, Puff Adders, Boom Slings, as well as a Caiman, Gila Monster, and an Alligator Snapping Turtle. The venom of the snakes seized is considered highly toxic and possibly lethal to both humans and animals. The plea agreement indicates that the market value of all of the reptiles unlawfully possessed by Bartolini was \$10,946.

Bartolini has been released on a personal recognizance bond since he was arrested in September 2007.

The case is being investigated by the United States Fish and Wildlife Service and prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney Christina M. Brown.

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