



NEWS RELEASE

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**UNITED STATES ATTORNEY,
WESTERN DISTRICT OF MISSOURI**

**BUREAU OF ALCOHOL,
TOBACCO AND FIREARMS**

Contact Don Ledford, Public Affairs • (816) 426-4220 • 400 East Ninth Street, Room 5510 • Kansas City, MO 64106

UPDATE: NITRO TASK FORCE **LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES LAUD CRIME-FIGHTING STRATEGY**

KANSAS CITY, Mo. – Todd P. Graves, United States Attorney for the Western District of Missouri, and Mark S. James, Special Agent in Charge of the Kansas City Field Division of the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms, welcomed law enforcement representatives from 16 counties in northwest Missouri who gathered today for a status report on NITRO – the Northwest Missouri Interagency Team Response Operation.

“NITRO was launched with the conviction that federal, state and local agencies working together could generate the critical mass needed to aggressively investigate and prosecute narcotics trafficking, illegal gun activity and violent crime in northwest Missouri,” Graves said. “After only five months, NITRO is already proving itself effective in targeting violent offenders, armed felons and armed drug traffickers. NITRO is making a strategic difference in Northwest Missouri.”

Since the launch of the NITRO Task Force last October, Graves said, 28 defendants have been referred for prosecution to the U.S. Attorney’s Office, constituting 40 alleged violations of federal law. NITRO-certified clandestine lab technicians have responded to 20 methamphetamine labs.

“The ATF is pleased with the outstanding joint cooperation of the NITRO partners,” James said. “This task force has proven to be highly effective in fighting crime in northwest Missouri.”

NITRO, which encompasses the 16-county area of northwest Missouri, expanded in January to include partnership with the sheriff's departments of Andrew, Grundy and Worth Counties. Those agencies have joined the original NITRO partnership of full-time law enforcement officers from the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms, the Missouri State Highway Patrol, the Maryville Public Safety Department and the Cameron Police Department. Additional law enforcement agencies continue to participate on a case-by-case basis in their jurisdictions. NITRO also works closely with existing law enforcement task forces in Buchanan County, northeast Missouri and elsewhere.



This news release, as well as additional information about the NITRO Task Force or the office of the United States Attorney for the Western District of Missouri, is available on-line at

www.usdoj.gov/usao/mow