

United States Marshals Service



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“ADAM WALSH ACT” DESIGNATES U.S. MARSHALS TO CATCH UNREGISTERED SEX OFFENDERS

Portland, Oregon – The “Adam Walsh Child Protection and Safety Act” was signed into law by President Bush today in Washington, on the 25th anniversary of Adam’s abduction and murder. The Act makes it a federal felony for convicted sex-offenders who fail to register with their local authorities.

The U.S. Marshals Service was designated by the Act as the agency to lead the national effort to track down and arrest these fugitive felons.

"We have been working with our state and local partners for some time to go after sexual predators, but when this legislation is fully implemented, unregistered sex offenders will be considered federal fugitives, and they will be a priority for Deputy U.S. Marshals across this country, “ said John Clark, Director of the Marshals Service.

“We look forward to working with the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children to arrest those sex offenders who lurk in our neighborhoods, and threaten the safety of our children and communities,” added Clark.

To ensure that the Marshals Service is prepared to rapidly respond to this new and critically important mission, Bob Finan, Assistant Director of Investigative Service Division, announced the formation of the Sexual Predator Crimes Branch at Marshals Service headquarters.

This year from April 17 to April 23, the U.S. Marshals arrested 1,102 fugitives wanted for committing felony sex offenses, violent sexual assaults, and failure to register as sex offenders, during Operation FALCON II. This operation occurred primarily in the 27 states west of the Mississippi River. Here in Oregon, more than 75 sex offender fugitives were arrested including 44 wanted for failure to register as sex offenders.

United States Marshal for the District of Oregon, Dennis Merrill, emphasized the impact of the operation. “How many innocent people we spared from becoming victims of sexual offenses or other violent crimes we will never know. But what we do know is that by removing these fugitives from our streets, it will make a very real difference in the lives of Oregonians by making our communities safer throughout the state.”

Operation FALCON II fugitives were wanted by the Marshals Service, other federal agencies, and courts at every level of government. Because the highest priority was given to sexual predators and unregistered convicted sex offenders, the USMS entered into a partnership with the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children, which

provided high-profile cases and facilitated contacts with state agencies that maintain sex offender registries.

In the near future, Operation FALCON III will be conducted in the states and territories east of the Mississippi. The apprehension of felons wanted for sex offenses will again be a priority for the U.S. Marshals.

Nationally, from October 1, 2005 through July 26 this year, the U.S. Marshals have arrested 718 unregistered sex offenders, 1,849 fugitives for sexual assault charges, and 1,257 fugitives wanted for other sex offenses.

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