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PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

Date: **July 17, 2009**
Re: **Skinhead gang member sent to prison**

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Modesto, California - Stanislaus County District Attorney Birgit Fladager announced today that **JOSHUA SNYDER, age 29, of Modesto**, was sentenced this morning to 5 years in prison by the Honorable Judge Dawna Reeves after Snyder pled guilty to being a felon in possession of a firearm and admitting that he possessed the firearm to benefit the **Modesto Hardcore Skinhead Criminal Street Gang**. The charge and enhancement constitute a "strike" under California's "Three Strikes" law.

On May 6, 2009, law enforcement officers recognized **Snyder** as a gang member on parole who was driving on a suspended driver's license. **Snyder** drove to his house and then fled from the officers who attempted to detain him. Officers located a loaded 9 millimeter handgun inside defendant's house. After Snyder was detained, he admitted possession of the firearm to the officers.

The Prosecution stated in court during the plea that the **Modesto Hardcore Skinheads** are a criminal street gang and that gang members who possess firearms do so for two reasons: Offense and Defense. Gang members use firearms on the Offense when the firearm is used during the commission of the gang's primary activities which include drug dealing and robbery. Gang members use firearms on the Defense to protect themselves from rival gang members during turf disputes. Both offensive and defensive use of firearms by gang members confers a benefit on the gang itself by instilling fear and intimidation in community residents and rival gang members.

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