

## **Judge: Early end for refuge occupation leader's supervision**

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PORTLAND, Ore. (AP) — A federal judge has ended Oregon refuge occupation leader Ryan Payne's federal supervision a year and a half early.

Payne, once described as a pivotal "architect" of the armed takeover of the Malheur National Wildlife Refuge, served his prison term of three years and one month and completed half of three years of ordered supervised release. He pleaded guilty to conspiring to impede federal employees at the wildlife refuge through intimidation, threat or force. He has paid \$10,000 in restitution.

Payne has married since leaving prison, has children and is now head of operations at REM developing a new method of processing raw materials in the metals supply industry, according to his lawyer Lisa Hay, Oregon's federal public defender.

Federal prosecutors did not object to ending his supervision. U.S. District Judge Anna J. Brown granted Payne's request, effective May 12.

Payne was one of 18 people who either pleaded guilty or were convicted by a jury in the 41-day Malheur refuge occupation in 2016. Leader Ammon Bundy, brother Ryan Bundy and five others were acquitted of all charges during a trial.

In 2018, a federal judge in Nevada dismissed separate conspiracy charges against Payne, Ammon and Ryan Bundy and their father, Cliven Bundy, after she found prosecutors engaged in "flagrant misconduct" and a "deliberate attempt to mislead" and made several misrepresentations to both the defense and the court about evidence. The U.S. Attorney's office is appealing the dismissal.