

agement concerns...” Marius did not have a record of violating prison rules. It appears he is being held in this unit because of his political beliefs.

Marius came out to his friends, family and supporters as transgender in 2014. Previously known as “Marie Mason,” he changed his name, uses male pronouns, and embarked on a course to get a medical diagnosis that would allow him to seek gender affirming surgery and hormone therapy. The Bureau of Prisons (BOP) has already diagnosed Marius as having gender dysphoria, and has made some clothing and commissary accommodations in accordance with their established policy. Subsequently, Caswell has been running a plethora of medical diagnostic tests to screen him as being healthy enough to receive the care he has requested, and this process is now in its second year. That time frame ignores the stress of being denied medical care for the gender dysphoria, which includes depression and anxiety; and physical symptoms consistent with stress. A real concern is that, as the years drag on, Marius’s age alone will preclude him from accessing surgery and hormone therapy he needs.

An accomplished artist, poet, and musician, Marius has continued to build his artistic skills in prison. Those expressions bring solace in a place that works hard to crush and erase it. Marius’

beautiful paintings often speak to the struggles and issues that he continues to care about from inside the prison walls. Marius has been involved in so much activism on righteous causes and has done so much good in the world, that it is especially tragic he is caged in particularly egregious conditions serving the longest sentence of any of the so-called “Green Scare” prisoners.

The unfairness of his sentence becomes clear when compared to those meted out to others. By contrast, a man who set an “arson for profit” fire that paralyzed a Detroit firefighter and injured six of his colleagues was sentenced to a maximum of seven years in prison, the norm for arson charges.

There is no accountability in this system of injustice. It is urgent that we work to support Marius and other political prisoners and confront outrageous prison terms. Please take the time to write Marius and let him know that he is supported by the larger activist community.

If you wish to write Marius, you can send letters to the following address:

**Marius Mason**  
#04672-061  
FMC Fort Worth  
P.O. Box 15330  
Fort Worth, TX 76119

# Marius Mason

## Earth Liberation Front Political Prisoner Serving 22 years in Federal Prison



Marius Mason is an anarchist, environmental and animal rights activist currently serving nearly 22 years in federal prison for acts of property damage carried out in defense of the planet. After being threatened with a life sentence in 2009 for these acts of sabotage, he pled guilty to arson charges in two incidents and admitted to 12 other acts of property damage. No one was physically harmed in these actions. At sentencing the judge applied a so-called “terrorism enhancement,” adding almost two years to an already extreme sentence requested by the prosecution.

Marius has a long history of activism going back to his high school years, when he became active in peace and environmental organizing. He also became associated with the anarchist publication, the Fifth Estate. Marius participation in the environmental and animal rights movements included helping to organize non-violent civil disobedience and direct action campaigns. These actions included but were not limited oc-

cupation of public lands, tree-sits to protest development and anti-fur demonstrations. He became active with conservation and human rights groups, tackling issues of water grabs and poverty, while also fighting to create local spaces like community gardens. His work spans many organizations, such as Earth First!, Sweetwater Alliance, Food Not Bombs, and ADAPTT (Animals Deserve Protection Today and Tomorrow). Marius also worked on getting books into prisons through the Anarchist Black Cross. He was also active on workers’ rights issues, primarily through involvement with the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW) for nearly two decades.

### Earth Liberation Front

On December 31, 1999, the Agriculture Hall on the campus of Michigan State University (MSU) in East Lansing was set ablaze. The Earth Liberation Front (ELF) claimed responsibility for the action, stating that the facility was engaging in genetic en-

gineer of crops. The incident caused over \$1.1 million in damages. This was second action taken against the University by environmental and animal liberation groups. A 1992 arson at the MSU's mink research facility and campus research offices caused damage estimated at more than \$2.5 million. A radical environmentalist, Rodney Coronado, served more than four years in federal prison for his role in that incident.

The day after the Agriculture Hall action, commercial logging equipment was set on fire near Mesick, Michigan. The words "Log in Hell" and "ELF" were spray painted on the equipment. The fire caused approximately \$18,000 in damage. These acts were committed by a group of ELF activists that between August of 1999 and September 2003, engaged in over fourteen different actions under the Earth Liberation Front banner. The combined monetary damage of these actions was estimated between \$2.5 to \$7 million.

On July 19, 2000, federal agents raided the home of Marius Mason and his spouse, Frank Ambrose. The raid was connected to two incidents that took place on June 26, 2000 when the Earth Liberation Front engaged in "timber spiking" at two timber sales in Brown County and Monroe County. The ELF released a communiqué publicly claiming credit for the action and warning

timber companies not to cut. Ambrose was arrested six months later and charged with the incidents. Throughout 2001, both Ambrose and Mason faced incredible pressure with increased monitoring of their activity. The day after September 11th, the government dropped their charges against Ambrose due to a lack of evidence.

Despite charges being dropped, the two continued to be monitored and harassed by the federal government. In 2002, Mason and Ambrose fought a grand jury subpoena investigating sabotage at an Ice Mountain water bottling plant. The two resisted the grand jury but were forced in 2004 to provide DNA samples to the government as part of the subpoena.

In March of 2007, a person digging through a dumpster was

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***"In the isolating environment of prison, this is toxic and intimidating, and amounts to the cruelest form of psychological torture."***

**- Marius Mason**

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alarmed to find boxes that contained Earth First! magazines, maps of Michigan with the location of an ELF attack highlighted, an M-80 explosive device, a block of candle wax, and even a gas mask labeled "Frank's Gas Mask." These items were placed in the dumpster by Frank Am-

brose, who had also made the mistake of throwing away personal records.

Less than one month after the items were recovered, Frank Ambrose began working as an informant for the FBI. He recorded roughly 178 conversations with a variety of "targets," traveling out of state seven times. He participated



in legal groups and even provided workshops on ELF security. Most heinous of his actions was the fact that he had provided information on his partner, Marius. The government credits him with bringing "long-stymied eco-terror investigations back to life."

On March 10, 2008, Marius Mason was arrested and indicted along with Frank Ambrose and two others (Aren Burthwick, and Stephanie Fultz). They were charged with the New Year's Eve and New Year's Day incidents eight years prior. On the same day of Mason's arrest, Ambrose

filed for divorce. Even after his arrest and indictment, Ambrose continued to circulate emails attempting to entrap more activists. Frank Ambrose was eventually sentenced to nine years in federal prison.

Burthwick and Fultz also cooperated with authorities and testified against Mason. They received sentences ranging probation and to 14-months in jail. Another activist, David Agranoff also agreed to cooperate with prosecutors against Mason. Like Ambrose, Agranoff continued to engage with other activists with the hope of discovery information for the government.

In September of 2008, Marius accepted a non-cooperating plea agreement. Although Mason accepted a plea bargain for 15–20 years, the judge sentenced him to 21 years and 10 months and ordered restitution of \$4.1 million to the sites damaged by his acts. Part of Mason's plea agreement stipulated that he had to accept the so-called Terrorism Enhancement designation, which provided for broad discretion in sentencing. An appeal for a reduction in his sentence was denied in 2010.

Marius is incarcerated in the high security Administration Unit at the Federal Medical Center Carswell in Fort Worth, Texas, a unit "designed for female inmates with histories of escapes, chronic behavior problems, repeated incidents of assaultive or predatory behavior, or other special man-