

BUTTE COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE MEDIA RELEASE

**JERRY W. SMITH
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DATE : **09-14-12**
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On 09-12-12, members of the Butte County Sheriff's Office Special Enforcement Unit (SEU) served a search warrant in the 15000 block of Emma Mine Way, Magalia. Upon service of the search warrant, Detectives with SEU located Noe Farias Cabbera (Age 27 of Redwood City), Carlos Zapien (Age 27 of Redwood City) and Francisco Javier Quintero (Age 41 of Jalisco, Mexico) working a large marijuana garden. All three subjects were detained while a fourth suspect fled into the canyon upon seeing the Detectives.

After a lengthy investigation, it was determined that the marijuana garden was illegal and being disguised under Proposition 215. A total of 272 marijuana plants were eradicated with a net weight of the marijuana being 4,100 pounds (over two tons). Noe Cabbera was arrested for the cultivation and sale of marijuana. His bail is \$100,000.00. Carlos Zapien was arrested for the cultivation and sale of marijuana. His bail is \$100,000.00. Francisco Javier Quintero was arrested for the cultivation of marijuana. His bail is \$50,000.00. Immigration holds are also pending on all three subjects.

This marijuana garden was especially challenging due to the fact that a large section of this property off of Emma Mine Way had been terraced to support the growing of 272 marijuana plants. The steepness of this marijuana garden was extreme and the use of the Butte County Sheriff's Office helicopter was invaluable in the eradication of the marijuana plants.

Detectives at the scene were awe struck at the environmental damage caused by this marijuana grow due to the extreme terracing of the hillside and the herbicides used, which were draining into the water shed. Besides several illegally erected structures on the property, a steep road was illegally being cut from the top of the marijuana grow to the bottom of the property above Butte Creek Canyon. All the timber and brush that had been cleared from the land was piled along the marijuana garden's border causing a major fire hazard to nearby residences off Emma Mine Way and Tom's Trail, Magalia.

Detectives expect major erosion to occur in the next few months when rain and snow fall will be present. An environmental investigation is being conducted due to the massive damage this marijuana garden has caused at the hands of several marijuana cultivators seeking major profits from the sale of marijuana.



From evidence located at the Emma Mine Way location, Detectives served two more search warrants at homes in the Paradise area on 09-13-12. In the 5500 block of Longview Drive, Detectives located an indoor marijuana grow that contained 131 marijuana plants. In the 5900 block of Sunny Lane, Detectives located an indoor marijuana grow that contained 89 marijuana plants. It was determined that both locations were tied to the Emma Mine Way marijuana operation and all 220 indoor marijuana plants were eradicated.



In total, 492 marijuana plants were eradicated with a street value of approximately \$2,656,800.00 (two million six hundred and fifty-six thousand eight hundred dollars). This investigation is continuing, with more arrests expected.