



Santa Barbara County Sheriff's Office

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News Release

Sheriff's North County Narcotics Unit Serves Search Warrant on an Unlawful Marijuana Cultivation and Trafficking Operation

Buellton- On Wednesday, October 30, 2013, detectives from the Santa Barbara County Sheriff's North County Narcotics Investigations Unit, served a search warrant on a property in the 900 Block of Ballard Canyon, an unincorporated area located northeast of Buellton. The service of this search warrant was the culmination of a multi-month investigation into an unlawful marijuana trafficking and cultivation operation based in and around the Buellton area.

As result of the warrant service, Sheriff's Narcotics Detectives seized more than 130 pounds of processed marijuana and eradicated approximately 60 marijuana plants that were being grown at the location. The estimated combined potential street value of the processed marijuana and marijuana plants is approximately \$560,000.

No immediate arrests were made during the service of the search warrant, nor have criminal charges been filed with the District Attorney's Office as of this press release. As such, the Sheriff's Office is not releasing the names of the persons suspected of being responsible for this unlawful marijuana trafficking and cultivation operation. Sheriff's Narcotics investigators are continuing their investigation, seeking to identify and prosecute all persons involved in this criminal operation.

Although California's compassionate use act provides legal exceptions allowing for certain individuals to grow and possess marijuana for personal "medical" use and for legitimate caregivers to grow and provide medical marijuana to persons in their care, for profit marijuana cultivation and trafficking is completely illegal. The Santa Barbara County Sheriff's Office actively investigates and seeks criminal prosecution in all instances of suspected unlawful marijuana trafficking and cultivation. The Sheriff's Office would like to remind our community members that persons engaged in these illegal activities are responsible for supplying illegal drugs within our communities and to our children. They also endanger their immediate neighbors who are placed at a greater risk of being victimized in a home invasion crime or burglary, as result of other criminals attempting to target the drugs and money believed to be present as result of their neighbor's unlawful marijuana cultivation and trafficking operation. The Sheriff's Office encourages members of the community to contact us with any information relating to suspected drug trafficking crimes, including large-scale marijuana cultivation.