



Northwest HIDTA

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Spokane

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Yakima

September - December 2009

January 19, 2010

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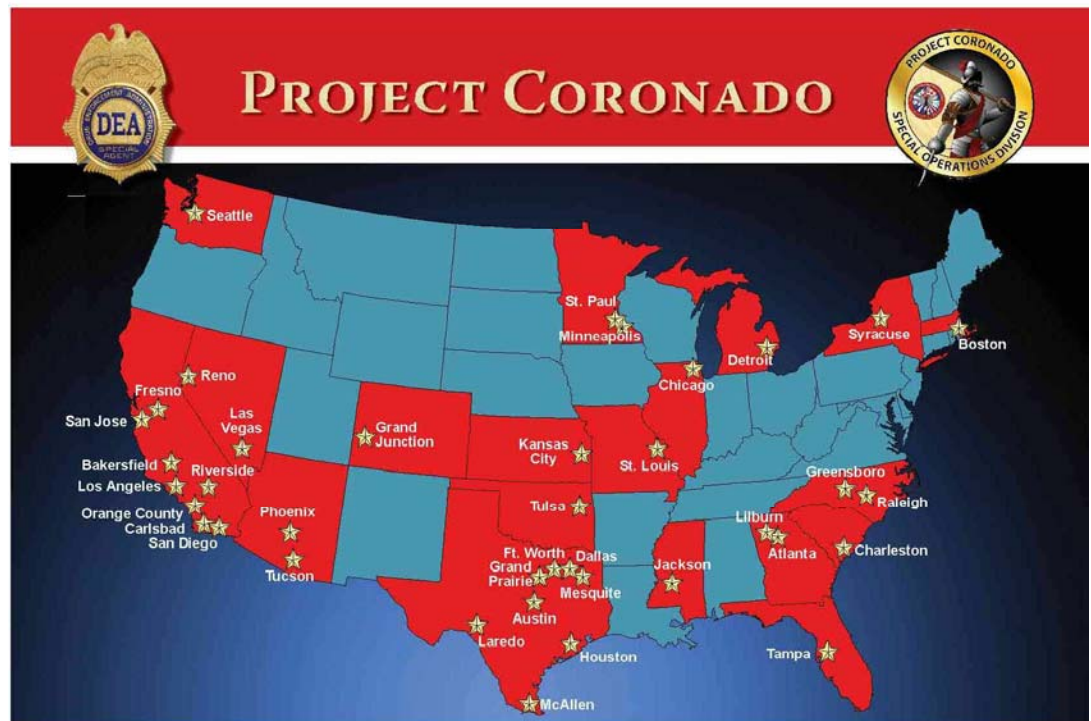
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This report is specially prepared for the ONDCP High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area Program Edited by Theresa Blahato

Project Coronado by CIS Julia Fisher

On October 21st and 22nd, 2009, federal, state, and local law enforcement agencies across the nation conducted the takedown of Project Coronado, the largest single US strike against Mexican drug cartels in history. This four-year investigation, targeting the La Familia Cartel, resulted in a total of 1,186 individuals arrested, seizures of \$33 million in US Currency; 1,999 kilograms cocaine, 2,730 pounds methamphetamine, 29 pounds of heroin; 16,390 pounds of marijuana, 389 weapons, 269 vehicles, and 2 clandestine drug labs. The two-day takedown involved the cooperation of more than 3,000 agents and officers in 19 States across the United States and resulted in 303 arrests and the seizure of 62 kilograms of cocaine, 729 pounds of methamphetamine, 967 pounds of marijuana, 144 weapons, 109 vehicles, and 2 clandestine labs.



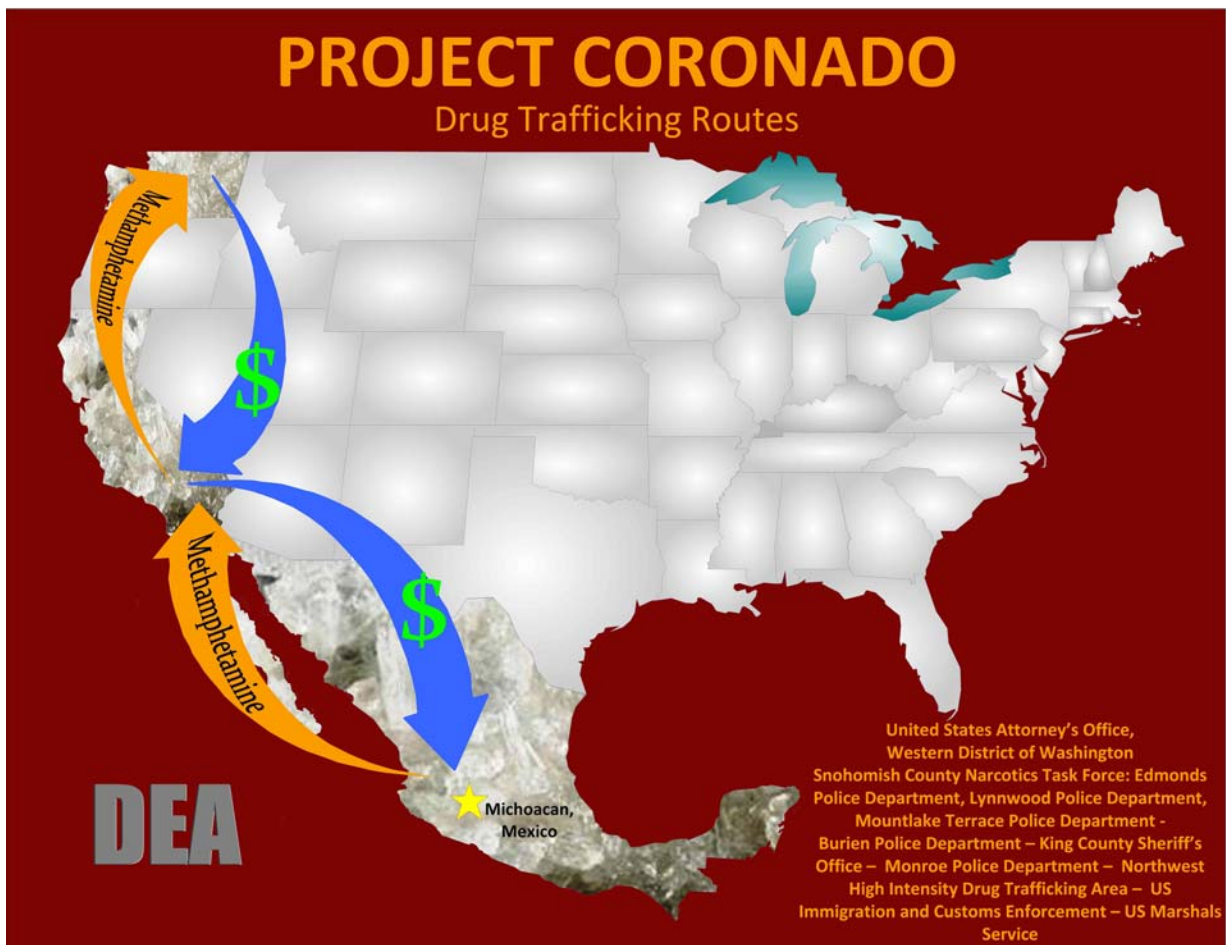
The target of Project Coronado, the La Familia Cartel, recently split from its ally, the Gulf Cartel, specifically Los Zetas, and is known for its extreme violence, often using murder and torture to suppress rivals. Based in the state of Michoacan, La Familia is responsible for importing large quantities of cocaine and

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Methamphetamine into the United States from Mexico. Despite the fact that La Familia is responsible for a majority of the methamphetamine entering the United States across the Southwest Border, they are philosophically opposed to the sale of methamphetamine to Mexicans. In fact many La Familia members are recruited from drug rehabilitation clinics and then forbidden to consume alcohol or drugs despite the fact that they are asked to transport and sell them. Attorney General Holder indicated that Project Coronado "Has dealt a significant blow to La Familia's supply chain of illegal drugs, weapons, and cash flowing between Mexico and the United States."

Project Coronado involved 38 cities in 19 states across the United States including Washington. The Washington investigation began in December of 2008 and quickly revealed large quantities of methamphetamine and cocaine being brought up from California and then distributed in the Puget Sound area. Further investigation eventually linked the distributors and their sources back to La Familia in Michoacan, Mexico. The Washington agencies involved in this Organized Crime and Drug Enforcement Task Force (OCDEF) investigation were the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA), the South Snohomish County Narcotics Task Force consisting of Lynnwood Police Department, Mountlake Terrace Police Department, and Edmonds Police Department, as well as the Burien Police Department, King County Sheriff's Office, the Seattle Police Department, Monroe Police Department, NW HIDTA, U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) and U.S. Marshal's Service.

During the Washington takedown on October 21st, search warrants were served on 19 residences and 22 vehicles. A total of 25 subjects were arrested, with seizures totaling 28 pounds of methamphetamine, 11 kilograms of cocaine, \$230,000 in U.S. Currency, 8 firearms, and 1 IED. Several of the vehicles seized were outfitted with false compartments for transporting drugs and money.





Director's Message by Dave Rodriguez

As we look back on this past year I wish to congratulate all the HIDTA Initiatives for a truly successful year as is readily apparent in a read through of the Initiative highlights. I was also privileged to receive the Advisory Committee Member of the Year Award from the Seattle University Criminal Justice Department. (see photograph).

Director Gil Kerlikowske made several visits to the Puget Sound area in November. He was the keynote speaker at the Washington Association of Sheriffs and Police Chiefs meeting as well as addressing the graduates of several Drug Courts.

We have made strides this year in decentralizing the reporting of Performance Measures so that almost every Initiative is inputting their information directly into the database.

The Threat Assessment Survey has also been emailed to all participants.

I also wish to recognize the sacrifices that our local law enforcement partners have had to endure this year with the cowardly killings of Seattle Police Officer Timothy Q. Brenton and Lakewood Police Officers Tina Griswold, Ronald Owens, Sergeant Mark Renninger, and Greg Richards. The outpouring of support for them and their families from law enforcement, the community, elected officials and everyday citizens was inspirational. May they rest in peace.



Officer Tina Griswold

Officer Ronald Owens

Sergeant Mark Renninger

Officer Greg Richards



Officer Timothy Q. Brenton

Director Dave Rodriguez receiving the Advisory Committee Member of the Year Award.



Prevention/Treatment Initiative by Steve Freng, Manager

As 2010 begins we are afforded an opportunity to review the past year, pausing to reflect on its challenges and to acknowledge its accomplishments. With particular regard for the community of therapeutic courts in Washington State, 2009 presented more than its share of challenges and was highlighted by several noteworthy accomplishments.

Foremost among the challenges for our therapeutic courts, especially our adult felony drug treatment courts, has been the impact of a distressed economy on the capacity of local communities to continue to invest in the programs. While the state is forecast to struggle through a very difficult fiscal year, we are appreciative that the Legislature enacted and continues to maintain the Criminal Justice Treatment Account (CJTA), providing a reliable resource base for programs designed to deliver treatment services to addicted offenders as an alternative to incarceration in the state correctional system. Counties, on the other hand – due to taxing and revenue structures that are extremely vulnerable to economic downturns – have few options, particularly when they depend on voter-approved tax increases.

Thus, among the 20 counties operating drug court programs, several have encountered thorny fiscal issues. Both the adult and juvenile drug court programs managed by the Cowlitz County court system were nearly ended mid-year due to severe budget shortfalls. Only a concerted effort on the part of stakeholders – including strong advocacy in the local media on behalf of the programs – averted closure and sustained operations for at least another year. The adult felony drug court program operated by Yakima County is undergoing a downsized reconfiguration of staff and resources which will result in a reduced capacity to serve eligible offenders. And the adult and juvenile drug court programs operated by the Benton/Franklin County partnership were unfortunately terminated at the end of the year, with no immediate outlook for restoration in the foreseeable future.

On the brighter side, however, good news can be reported in other communities and programs. Grays Harbor County, after a lengthy effort on the part of supporters throughout the county, is implementing a new adult drug court program which will serve the largest population center on the state's Pacific Coast and will join neighboring counties in providing services to most of the Olympic Peninsula. The Pierce County Superior Court announced late last year that it has been awarded a three-year, \$900,000 SAMHSA grant to create a veterans drug court program. Given the significant military presence in the county – it is estimated that over 95,000 veterans reside in Pierce County – the program will provide a much-needed adjunct to the current adult felony drug court program. Once fully implemented, it is expected that the program will serve approximately 35 eligible veterans annually.

And perhaps most noteworthy, the King County drug court program observed its 15th anniversary in 2009. The program was the twelfth drug court to be implemented in the United States and since its inception, 1,432 offenders have successfully completed the program and graduated. In recent years it has significantly expanded the availability and range of services provided and since 2005, 703 offenders have graduated from the program, representing an increase of 100% from 2005 through 2009. A drug court graduation held on November 18 afforded the occasion to celebrate the anniversary, which was attended by each of the nine judges who have served as the Drug Court Judge (including U.S. District Court Judge Ricardo Martinez, who was instrumental in the program's development and served as the first drug court judge) and by Judy Maleng, wife of the late Norm Maleng, former King County

Prosecuting Attorney, drug court supporter and champion for the legislation that created the CJTA. The event was especially privileged to have been addressed by Gil Kerlikowske, Director of the Office of National Drug Control Policy, and past Chief of the Seattle Police Department. Director Kerlikowske reaffirmed his strong support for drug court programs and expressed his pride in having been associated with one of the first and most successful drug court programs in the country.

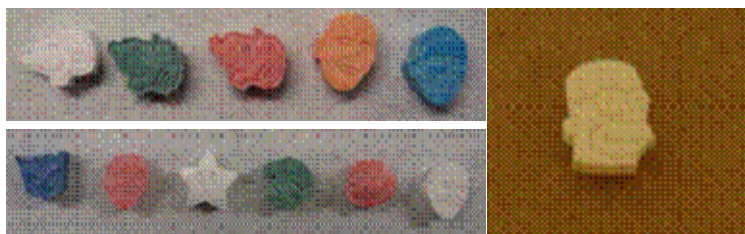
The Northwest HIDTA is proud to support these and the other drug court programs throughout the region as well. While not a principal source of revenue for partner programs, Northwest HIDTA funds support enhancements and innovations many programs consider essential to their success. And it is our intention to build on the successes, see our partners through difficult times, and continue to contribute to a robust and effective system of drug court programs throughout the Northwest HIDTA region.

If you have questions or comments regarding the Northwest HIDTA Prevention/Treatment Initiative, Steve Freng can be contacted at 206.352.3603 or sfreng@nw.hidta.org.

Emerging Trends - BZP by ISC Manager Theresa P. Blahato

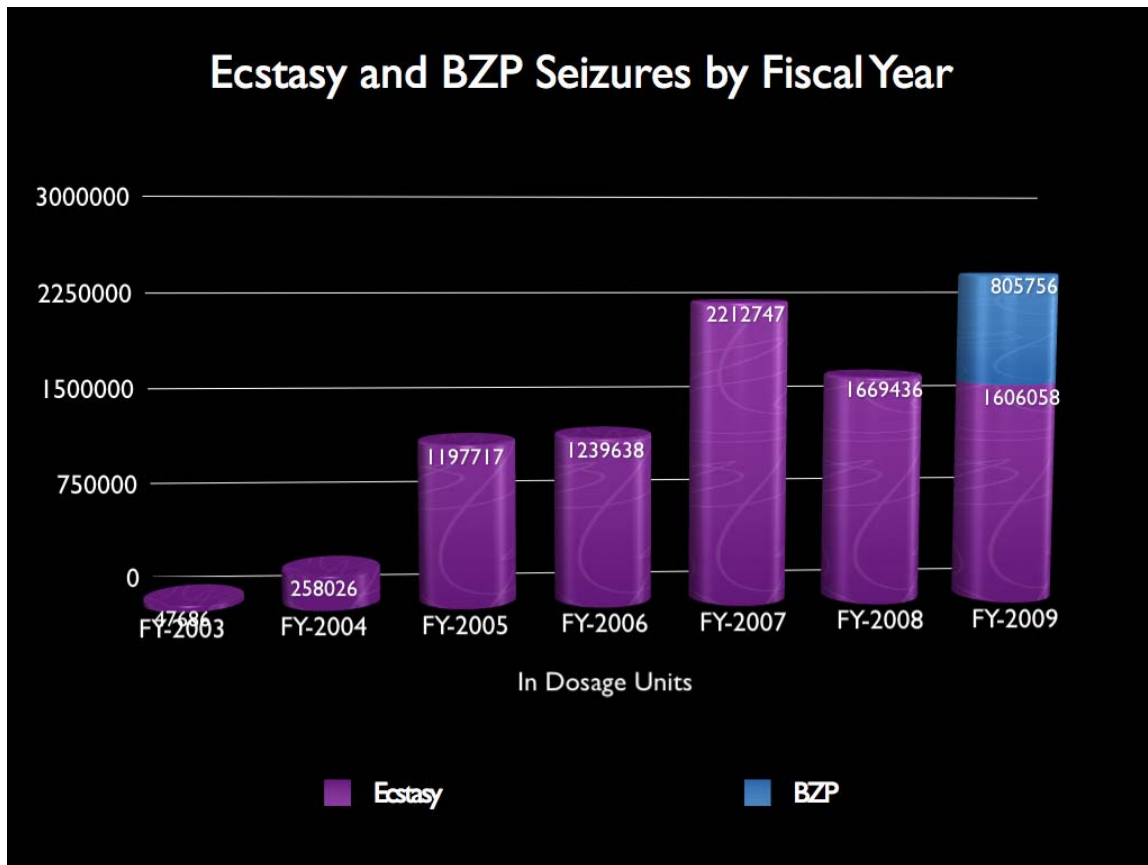
According to DEA Office of Diversion, BZP (N-BENZYLPIPERAZINE) is also known by street names A2, Legal E or Legal X, is a growing concern to law enforcement and the general public. The source of supply for the drug is from Canada, where it is either produced in clandestine laboratories or shipped from the Far East to Canada and then transshipped to the United States. The drug is passed off as MDMA aka Ecstasy. Like MDMA, BZP is marketed to youth by tablets that look like candy in the shape of pop culture icons, cartoons, and symbols. BZP is not a scheduled drug in Canada, but is listed as a Scheduled I drug under the Controlled Substances Act in the United States, because of the high potential for abuse and no known medical use.

BZP is often taken in combination with 1-[3-(trifluoro-methyl)phenyl]piperazine (TFMPP). TFMPP is known by the street name Molly. TFMPP is a non-controlled substance, has been promoted to youth population as substitute for MDMA at raves (all-night dance parties). It may also be abused alone for its stimulant effects. BZP is generally administered orally as either powder or tablets and capsules. Other routes of administration included smoking and snorting.



Pacific Region Integrated Border Intelligence Team (IBIT) Photo: BZP pills in the shape of pop culture figures, such as President Obama, Bart Simpson, Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles, and Transformers.

The Pacific Region IBIT reported BZP seizures for federal Fiscal Year (FY) 2009 only. U.S. federal FY runs from October 1st to September 30th of the following year. When counted with MDMA seizures, both drugs exceeded MDMA seizures for the prior fiscal years.



Source: IBIT

Several recent significant seizures at the border include the following:

- January 11, 2009, Gurjodh "Gary" CHEEMA, was arrested at the U.S./Canada border attempting to smuggle approximately 2,281 dosage units (d.u.) of MDMA (3,4-methylenedioxy-methamphetamine), 38.5 OxyContin pills, 9 Percocet pills, 5 Xanax pills, and 7.5 Suboxone pills into the United States. On January 28, 2009, 66.02 pounds of MDMA was found abandoned near the border. Also on January 28, 2009, 79.2 pounds of BZP were seized from Richard PACHECO. On March, 19, 2009, approximately 50,000 d.u. of BZP were seized from James Conrad Joseph COURCHAINE, another individual connected to this DTO.



DEA Bellingham: Approximately 79.2 pounds of BZP seized in Lynden, Washington in January 2009.

- In April 2009, James RIGGINS attempted to smuggle approximately 105,194 d.u. of BZP from Canada into the United States at the Peace Arch Port of Entry (POE). The BZP was in a hidden compartment in the cargo bed of the truck RIGGINS was driving. In June 2009, a woman attempted to smuggle approximately 107,734 BZP pills from Canada into the United States at the Pacific Highway POE. The pills were hidden in a secret compartment built into the cargo area of her sports utility vehicle (SUV). Also in June 2009, Canada Border Services Agency (CBSA) officers seized two outbound shipments destined for the Seattle area. Health Canada tests confirmed that the packages contained BZP. On June 6, 2009, U.S. authorities intercepted the packages and estimated one package to contain 26,159 d.u. of BZP and the other to contain 26,338 d.u. of BZP.

IBIT Photo: Approximately 52,497 BZP pills seized in June 2009 destined for Seattle/Renton, WA.



- On June 26, 2009, U.S. Border Patrol stopped a Ford Explorer driven by Krysta Edwards. Agents found a secret compartment with drugs, but let Edward go to follow her to additional members of the organization. Edwards drove to the Bellis Fair Mall in Bellingham, where she met Nen Cruces, a Canadian citizen. She followed Cruces to a storage facility. She later left with Cruces in his vehicle – hours later, both returned to the storage locker. Agents arrested Edwards and Cruces, and seized more than 100,000 pills of BZP. Edwards and Cruces were charged in U.S. District Court in Seattle with possession with the intent to distribute.

Greater regulation and control of this drug in Canada will help both U.S. and Canadian law enforcement identify chemical sources of supply, target clandestine laboratories, and uncover Drug Trafficking Organizations. The Northwest HIDTA will continue to work closely with international, federal, state, local, and tribal law enforcement and the Prevention/Treatment community in intelligence-sharing and joint projects.

Investigative Support Center Update by Theresa P. Blahato

The NW HIDTA Investigative Support Center (ISC) continues to support all major investigations from the HIDTA initiatives as well as national HIDTA program initiatives. During this reporting period, the HIDTA ISC supported Project Coronado, which targeted members of the La Familia Organization. This report is highlighted as a lead article in the newsletter.

The ISC has completed a report on Indian Country issues. The report provides an overall strategic view of criminal activities taking place on the reservations. The report highlights investigations that have impacted the availability of drugs on tribal lands.

Initiative News

Snohomish Regional Drug Task Force

Washington State. Prescription take-back programs have thus far been unsuccessful in the state legislature which has prompted law enforcement to take matters into their own hands. On November 30, 2009, Snohomish Regional Drug Task Force (SRDTF) held a press conference in partnership with the Department of Ecology, Snohomish County Solid Waste, the Department of Health, and the Science and Management of Addiction (SAMA) Foundation announcing a prescription drop-off program to take place in 28 police departments in Snohomish County. The campaign includes 33 secured lock boxes (purchased through Snohomish County Solid Waste) which will remain in the police departments for a period of time to provide citizens with a safe and effective way to dispose of unused pills from their homes. The boxes are bolted down and will be regularly emptied and the medications destroyed by law enforcement

The purpose of this event is to get the unused pills out of households and away from children and young adults who may become curious and start experimenting with drugs at home, eventually leading to addiction. The goals are to provide a vehicle in which citizens can safely get rid of unused pills and to hopefully prevent new addictions from forming. An additional benefit is that by allowing law enforcement to properly dispose of unused pills, it decreases the number of pills poured down the sink and flushed down the toilet in homes. These methods of disposal are not effective at eliminating the majority of pharmaceutical compounds and as a result, they can end up in our water systems.

Residents can drop off their unwanted or unused medications with relative anonymity, leaving them in the original prescription containers, but blacking out personal information. The only thing required is the ZIP code of the resident for research purposes.

SRDTF will be responsible for delivering and picking up the boxes for disposal.



Photo: Courtesy of Enterprise/Chris Goodenow



NW HIDTA Border Task Force

Bureau of Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE)
Whatcom County Sheriff's Office

On May 29, 2009, ICE agents arrested 69 year old Amar Dutt, of Surrey, British Columbia with 27 pounds of Ecstasy. The drugs were found in the gas tank of his minivan. Dutt told agents that them he was driving to Seattle to buy healing crystals. a Border Patrol drug-sniffing dog detected the drugs. Schreiber says officers removed several vacuum-sealed bags containing more than 48,000 Ecstasy tablets with a street value of about \$500,000.

On June 26, 2009, US Border Patrol stopped a Ford Explorer driven by Krysta Edwards. Agents found a secret compartment with drugs, but let Edwards go to follow her to additional members of

the organization. Edwards drove to the Bellis Fair Mall in Bellingham, where she met Nen Cruces, a Canadian citizen. She followed Cruces to a storage facility. She later left with Cruces in his vehicle – hours later, both returned to the storage locker. Agents arrested Edwards and Cruces, and seized more than 100,000 pills of BZP. Edwards and Cruces were charged in US District Court in Seattle with possession with the intent to distribute.

On June 19, 2009, David R. Mendoza, 44, formerly of Bellevue, Washington, pled guilty in U.S. District Court in Seattle to Conspiracy to Import more than 1,000 kilograms of Marijuana. Under the terms of the plea agreement, Mendoza agreed to forfeit four properties to the government, which he admits were purchase with drug proceeds. These include properties in Bellevue, Tacoma, and Deer Park, Washington, as well as a movie theater in Bend, Oregon. Mendoza admitted that he was responsible for a 400 kilogram load of BC Bud, which was intercepted at the border crossing at Blaine, Washington in April 2003. The drugs were hidden in a load of lumber. Mendoza admitted that he imported more than 1,000 kilograms of BC Bud via helicopter into Washington State in 2005. Additional loads of marijuana belonging to Mendoza were seized in 2006. He admitted that he was responsible for importing and distributing thousands of pounds of marijuana in Washington and elsewhere by commercial truck and helicopter.

The first indictment in this case was returned in December 2006, and the indictment was unsealed in January 2007, after Mendoza was located in Spain. Mendoza was successfully extradited from Spain in April 2009.

On July 16, 2009, Edwin R. Fuller, of Cloverdale, British Columbia, Canada, was sentenced in U.S. District Court in Seattle to 30 months in prison and three years of supervised release for Possession of Marijuana with Intent to Distribute. On February 17, 2009, Fuller attempted to smuggle 1,746 pounds of marijuana into the United States from Canada, concealed in the floor of a cattle trailer. According to records filed in the case, Fuller arrived at the

Sumas Port of Entry driving a 2003 Peterbuilt tractor, towing a cattle trailer with about two dozen head of cattle. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) inspectors noticed a discrepancy in the floor of the cattle trailer. They directed Fuller to return to Canada and unload the cattle at a holding area so that they could further inspect the trailer. The further inspection revealed 1,746 pounds of marijuana concealed under the floor of the trailer. Fuller was arrested.

On July 30, 2009, Devron D. Quast, 40, of Abbotsford, British Columbia, was sentenced in U.S. District Court in Seattle to 75 months in prison and five years of supervised release for Conspiracy to Distribute Cocaine and Marijuana and Conspiracy to Engage in Money Laundering. Quast was arrested in June 2008, following a three year investigation that involved undercover officers and resulted in the seizure of more than 1,700 pounds of cocaine, 7,000 pounds of BC Bud and about \$3.5 million. To date, 40 defendants have been charged in connection with the investigation. Twelve of them are Canadian. Some of the defendants are from as far away as Iowa, Illinois, and Ontario, Canada. According to records filed in the case, drugs were hidden inside hollowed out logs on trucks, within the false walls of cargo containers and vehicles, within loads of commercial lumber and beauty bark, inside large PVC pipes, and within the interior of a propane tanker. Some loads were carried on foot across the international border between the United States and Canada. Quast admitted to law enforcement that he was one of the leaders of the criminal organization, oversaw the day to day operations of the drug transportation, even providing insurance to the Canadian marijuana suppliers that drugs would be successfully smuggled into the United States. Quast was arrested with co-defendant Robert L. Shannon. Agents seized an additional \$60,000 and hundreds of pounds of BC Bud that the ring was attempting to smuggle into the United States. Quast pled guilty November 20, 2008.

Robert J. Shannon, 38, of Maple Ridge, British Columbia, who was allegedly in charge of distributing the narcotics on behalf of the Hells Angels Outlaw Motorcycle Gang and others was sentenced March 13, 2009, to 20 years in prison.

Phillip W. Stone, 45, Abbotsford, British Columbia, who obtained containers and trailers to transport BC Bud into the U.S. pleaded guilty to Conspiracy to Distribute Cocaine and Marijuana on November 17, 2008. Stone was sentenced on July 10, 2009, to four years in prison.

Richard Jansen, 33, Chilliwack, British Columbia, owner of Scorpion Transport Services, allegedly assisted the organization by driving his trucks across the border to facilitate future smuggling. Jansen was sentenced on April 10, 2009, to 18 months in prison.

This was an Organized Crime and Drug Enforcement Task Force (OCDEF) investigation, providing supplemental federal funding to the federal and state agencies involved. The investigation was lead by ICE, with assistance from DEA, and the Snohomish Regional Drug Task Force.

On August 3, 2009, Border Patrol Agents seized 12 duffel bags containing 577 pounds of BC Bud marijuana near Maple Falls, Washington. ICE agents followed Brandine Phillips, a Canadian citizen, from the Nooksack River Casino to a remote, dead-end road near the Canadian border. When she drove back from the road, a Border Patrol unit pulled her over and conducted an immigration inspection and searched the vehicle. Agents found 12 black hockey bags filled with Canadian marijuana in the truck bed.

On August 18, 2009, US Border Patrol agents arrested two Canadian men and seized their boat near the San Juan Islands. The vessel contained 130 pounds of marijuana in 112 packages, which were hidden in two compartments in the ceiling and bilge. Danny Menard and Raymond Kuemper of Vancouver, B.C., were charged in U.S. District Court in Seattle with Conspiracy to Distribute

Marijuana. The CBP boat observed Menard's vessel approaching Cattle Point on the southwest side of San Juan Island. The route is a common drug-smuggling path.

A Canadian man has been charged with trying to smuggle \$350,000 into Washington at the Peace Arch Port of Entry. John Mohammadi made an initial appearance at U.S. District Court in Seattle on Sept. 21, 2009. He was arrested September 19th after border agents discovered a hidden compartment in his Hyundai, with shrink-wrapped piles of cash. He's been charged with one count of bulk cash smuggling. The federal complaint says he claimed he didn't know anything about the cash or the hidden compartment, and that he was stopping at a Nike outlet store before heading to the Tulalip Casino in Marysville. The complaint detailed that Mohammadi entered the United States five other times this year. There are no links to drugs or any other crime at this time.

Robert James Peterson, 42, of Victoria, British Columbia, Canada, was sentenced on September 25, 2009 in U.S. District Court in Seattle to 30 months in prison and three years of supervised release for Conspiracy to Import Marijuana. Peterson was arrested May 22, 2009, after his boat broke down in the Strait of Juan De Fuca following a smuggling episode. Agents found that he had an arrest warrant for a previous smuggling incident in 2006 where Peterson pled guilty on June 26, 2009, in connection with the indictment for the smuggling episode in 2006, when he and two other men imported more than 450 pounds of marijuana into the United States by boat. At sentencing U.S. District Judge Richard A. Jones said that 30 months was appropriate so that other Canadian drug smugglers know, "if you send drugs to the United States, you will serve time in prison in the United States." According to records filed in the 2006 case, Peterson originally came to the attention of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) in Victoria, BC in connection with his smuggling activities. On June 3, 2006, RCMP officers watched

activities. On June 3, 2006, RCMP watched as Peterson and another man sailed their 22 foot boat out of Sydney, on Vancouver Island. The RCMP alerted ICE, which monitored the boat as it crossed into the United States and landed at a beach on San Juan Island. Peterson and one of his co-defendants unloaded 11 nylon hockey bags which were later found to contain marijuana. The bags were picked up by Canadian Marc Georg, who was driving a white van. The van was later stopped and the marijuana was seized. Peterson and his co-defendant were videotaped by law enforcement returning to the Sydney marina in the boat. In October 2006, Marc Georg was sentenced to 15 months in prison. Peterson's two co-defendants in the indictment for the 2006 incident, Canadians Brenton Lloyd Craig and Brian Mann, remain fugitives in Canada. The U.S. is seeking their extradition. In May 2009, Peterson was arrested after he and two associates smuggled another load of marijuana into the United States by boat. In this case there were three large hockey bags of marijuana which were ultimately transferred into a car with Texas license plates. The drugs were later seized in Texas. Peterson has been detained at the Federal Detention Center at SeaTac since his arrest pending sentencing. The case was investigated by ICE, DEA, and the RCMP. This was an Organized Crime and Drug Enforcement Task Force (OCDETF) investigation, providing supplemental federal funding to the federal and state agencies involved.

Federal agents at the U.S.-Canada border have arrested the owner of a Canadian trucking firm and confiscated 192 pounds of cocaine they say was hidden in a truck he was driving from California into British Columbia. Sukhvinder Shoker, the driver and owner of a firm advertised as Careful Movers and Delivery Services, was arraigned on October 13, 2009. His truck was stopped at the Pacific Highway Port of Entry and agents observed what appeared to be a false wall hiding a compartment in the back of his truck. Agents found 24 cardboard boxes containing 87 kilograms of cocaine. Shoker picked up the

boxes up in California after a man he owed money to said he would work off the debt by moving several loads across the border. Shoker, the complaint says, told the agents he didn't know what was in the boxes, but knew it was illegal and probably contained drugs. Federal prosecutors say the seizure is the largest cocaine interdiction at the border since July, when agents seized 238 pounds of the drug. Shoker has been charged with possession of cocaine with intent to distribute.

On October 30, 2009, Nguyen Loan Anh Trinh, 31, of Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada, was sentenced in U.S. District Court in Seattle to 30 months in prison and three years of supervised release for Possession with Intent to Distribute MDMA (ecstasy). Trinh was arrested May 23, 2009, as she attempted to cross into the United States from Canada with 84 pounds of ecstasy hidden in the gas tank of the SUV she was driving. The pills were worth about \$1.2 million. Trinh had made 38 entries into the United States over the past two years. On at least ten of those she admitted to smuggling drugs. On May 23, 2009, Trinh arrived at the Blaine Port of Entry where she was dispatched to secondary inspection. During the inspection, CBP officers found a ratchet tool behind the driver's seat that fit bolts used to secure the back seat. The officers discovered the bolts were only hand tightened. When they removed the back seat, they found an access plate to the gas tank. Inside officers found 60 bags of pills totaling more than 120,000 ecstasy pills.

On November 13, 2009, federal and local agents arrested two men who were planning to smuggle 5 pounds of methamphetamine into Canada. Immigrations and Customs Enforcement agents arrested Avtar Singh Sidhu, 36, of Fresno, California, and Mandeep Gill, 32, of Bellingham in a parking lot in the 4100 block of Meridian Street and found the drug, worth \$125,000 to \$200,000, concealed in their car. Before the arrest, the men met with a confidential informant working for the Northwest Regional Drug Task Force who was to transport the drugs across the border for delivery in Surrey,

British Columbia.

Gurmit Singh Jassal, 31, a native of India, residing in British Columbia, Canada, was sentenced November 19, 2009 in U.S. District Court in Seattle to eight years in prison and three years of supervised release for Possession of Ecstasy with Intent to Distribute, Conspiracy to Distribute Ecstasy and Marijuana, and Possession of Marijuana with Intent to Distribute. Jassal was convicted in December 2008. Jassal was arrested on February 5, 2008, after he and another man were spotted by U.S. Border Patrol agents crossing the international border with Canada on foot carrying four duffel bags. At sentencing U.S. District Judge John C. Coughenour said his sentence reflects the seriousness of the crime and the need to deter others from smuggling these drugs into the United States. According to records in the case, and testimony at trial, Jassal and another man were spotted by surveillance cameras as they crossed the border on foot and entered the Smuggler's Inn near Blaine, Washington, carrying duffel bags with 47 kilograms of ecstasy and more than 9 kilograms of marijuana. After going to their pre-paid room, the men went to the front desk and asked the Inn's owner to arrange a ride to the Bellingham Airport. At the airport, a CBP officer questioned the men, who provided inconsistent answers about whether they knew each other and where they were headed. The ecstasy has a street value of about \$3.1 million. The marijuana has a street value of about \$60,000. The case was investigated by CBP, ICE, and DEA.

On December 10, 2009, Border Patrol agents interviewed the occupants of the vehicle. The driver of the vehicle, later identified as Naseer Hussain gave his consent to search the trunk. The passenger, later identified as Kim Amanda Farah was asked to exit the vehicle and complied. Hussain freely and voluntarily activated the trunk release from the interior of the vehicle. Hussain then exited the vehicle and opened the trunk. In plain view was a large black suitcase like bag. Hussein gave consent to perform a canine sniff of the interior and exterior of the vehicle which was done at the scene of the stop. A hand search of the bag was

performed and revealed 20 plastic containers with what appeared to be MDMA (Ecstasy) pills. Both subjects were placed under arrest and transported to the Blaine Border Patrol Station for questioning. Moments after the vehicle stop was conducted, a Blaine Sector Communications Center (KAK 780) relayed that they had just observed a single subject illegally enter Canada from the United States at the Smugglers Inn. Canadian authorities were notified but were unable to locate the subject. Upon arrival at the station, the substance tested positive for the presence of MDMA. The total combined weight of the 20 containers was 59.2 pounds. A count of 107,400 pills was determined using the extrapolation method.



ICE Photo: Seizure of 107,000 MDMA tablets at the U.S./Canadian border.

On December 12, 2009, Integrated Border Enforcement Team (IBET) and Washington State Patrol (WSP) seized 60 kilogram size bricks of cocaine from US citizens Martin Briand and David Prince in Skagit County, Washington. No arrests were made at this time. A WSP trooper stopped a vehicle for a traffic violation near Burlington, Washington. A K-9 narcotics dog reacted positive for the presence of drugs. WSP executed a search warrant and seized 60 kilograms (132 pounds) of cocaine located in the luggage. The cocaine has an estimated street value is \$1.5 million.

On December 16, 2009, Clayton Franklin Roueche, 34, of Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada, was sentenced in U.S. District Court in Seattle to 30 years in prison and five years of supervised release for Conspiracy to Export Cocaine, Conspiracy to Import Marijuana, and Conspiracy to Engage in Money Laundering. A federal grand jury in Seattle indicted Roueche in October 2007, but the indictment remained under seal until his arrest in Texas on May 19, 2008, when Roueche attempted to enter Mexico. He was denied entry and

escorted to a plane to return him to Canada. The plane made a stop in Dallas, Texas, where he was arrested on a warrant from the Western District of Washington. Roueche admitted in his plea agreement that from 2005 on he conspired with others to export cocaine from the United States to Canada, and conspired to import B.C. Bud marijuana into the United States. He also admitted that he conspired with others to transport and deliver the cash proceeds from the illegal drug sales. The plea agreement resolves possible charges in other judicial districts in California, Oregon, Eastern Washington, and Idaho.

The investigation of Roueche spanned three years and resulted in a number of seizures including 2,169 pounds of Canadian marijuana, 335 kilograms of cocaine, over \$2 million in U.S. currency, 2 pounds of crack cocaine, 4 pounds of methamphetamine, and five firearms. Roueche is the leader of the United Nations (UN) Gang. The stiff sentencing will serve to discourage other criminal groups from using the United States in their drug and money laundering activities.

Washington State Patrol Investigative Assistance Initiative

The Washington State Patrol Investigative Assistance Initiative (AID) reported the following methamphetamine trends for 2009:

- Increase in smaller methamphetamine laboratories.
- The rise in labs may be attributed to older methamphetamines cooks being released from state penitentiary.
- Split on previous demographics between Red Phosphorous and Nazi Methods.
- Increase in multiple phase cook sites.
- Several dump sites for each cook phase.

- More law enforcement agencies are disbanding their own lab teams; thereby increasing calls to IAD for service.
- Increase requests for Methamphetamine Awareness Training.

The IAD highlights assisted in many of the investigations listed in the Initiative News section. Some enforcement highlights include the following:

Cowlitz/Wahkiakum Narcotics Task Force (CWNTF): On October 1, 2009, the CWNTF served a search warrant, which netted over 80 pounds of processed marijuana, several weapons, several thousand dollars and two vehicles.

DEA Yakima Resident Office - Detectives from Kittitas County Sheriff's Office received an anonymous tip of a marijuana grow in the DeRoux Creek area. The tip gave GPS coordinates and indicated it was currently being harvested. An operational plan was formed and an IAD officer walked into the area with three Kittitas County deputies. Additional grows, water sources, and camps were located. The IAD detective and the deputies established perimeter locations around the campsite that had three persons processing marijuana. The Kittitas county SRT team responded to the area. All three were placed into custody and approximately 100 pounds of processed marijuana was seized.

Snohomish County Regional Drug Task Force (SRDTF) – On October 21, 2009, SRDTF, with the assistance of IAD, executed search warrants on two residences in Gold Bar and Monroe in support of the OCDEF case which targeted the La Familia organization. On October 23, 2009, IAD also assisted the SRDTF in processing a large methamphetamine lab. The lab was located in an apartment complex in downtown Everett. The suspect had been squatting in some vacant apartments. Half of the complex was under renovation. The suspect also had been burying his lab waste around the grounds of the complex.

DEA Spokane - In October, IAD assisted with the surveillance and the arrest of a suspect in possession of 47.16 kilograms of cocaine. The cocaine was to be smuggled into Canada by a known drug trafficking organization. The US value for a kilogram of cocaine is approximately \$25,000, but in Canada, the value increases to approximately \$40,000.

Significant SWAT activities for the IAD include the following:

On October 8, 2009, SWAT served a high risk search warrant for Olympic Peninsula Narcotics Enforcement Team (OPNET). SWAT served one of six search warrants in this case. During the service of this warrant, the main suspects along with two others were taken into custody. The suspect, who is also a convicted felon, was in possession of 10 weapons at the residence. Approximately 20-30 pounds of processed marijuana, hashish, and 300 plants were found at the grow site a short distance away from this target.

On October 21, 2009, SWAT served a high risk search warrant in Monroe, Washington.. This warrant was served in conjunction with the DEA nationwide investigation codenamed Project Coronado. This warrant was served on a large residence and recycling yard in the Monroe city limits. On the departments' safety plan threat matrix, this warrant ranked the highest so far in 2009. During the subsequent investigative search of the residence, numerous dangerous items were found; these included an AR-15 assault rifle, a TEC-9 semi-auto pistol, a small homemade grenade, 40mm artillery shell, and a military booby trap simulator. The search had to be suspended until the bomb squad could deal with the explosive items.

On October 26, 2009, SWAT was requested by the Thurston County Sheriff's Office to assist with the dismantling and evidentiary processing of a clandestine methamphetamine lab found in the Bucoda area. The Thurston County Sheriff's Office had surveillance on the lab site and taken two

suspects into custody. It was later discovered that the lab site was on Washington State Department of Natural Resources (DNR) property. In order to get to the lab site, they had to utilize ATV quads as the lab site was well over a quarter of a mile into the wooded area. Lab-related items were also found in a vehicle and the residence.

On November 18, 2009, SWAT served a VUCSA warrant in Woodland at the request of the Clark-Skamania and Cowlitz-Wahkiakum Narcotics task forces. The warrant was served for distribution and the manufacture of Methamphetamine. During the service of this warrant, 90 grams of methamphetamine was discovered along with 10 weapons. Two of the weapons were stolen, and had homemade weapon suppressors.

On November 24, 2009, SWAT assisted Washington State Department of Corrections (DOC) in a "warrant round-up" in the Thurston county area. According to DOC personnel, this was "one of the most productive days so far." SWAT troopers used a number of investigative skills and techniques to locate and finally take into custody the main warrant suspect, Larry G. Whitaker. Whitaker is looking at three to five years for failing to register as a sex offender for rape of a child. Whitaker was the last to be taken into custody and had to be subdued by DOC personnel. The team took an additional six other wanted persons into custody.

December 8, SWAT was part of the large security force that was present at the funeral services for the four fallen Lakewood Police Department officers, held at the Tacoma Dome. This security force was made up of six SWAT teams from the Puget Sound region. The security force also contained; uniformed officers, K-9 units, plain clothed intelligence and surveillance detectives, bomb squad personnel, motor units, and aviation resources. WSP SWAT was given the privilege to be the interior security SWAT team. This was a great honor for the members of WSP SWAT to be able to provide close-in tactical security for the family members and other officers that attended

this emotional event.

Thurston County Narcotics Task Force

On October 8, 2009, Thurston County Narcotics Task Force (TNT) concluded an investigation involving a Winlock man distributing marijuana with a buy-bust and search warrants on two residences. Detectives recovered approximately 5 pounds of processed marijuana and two outdoor marijuana grows. October 28, TNT concluded an investigation into the distribution of marijuana with a buy-bust of 5 pounds of marijuana. Not only did the suspect bring the 5 pounds of marijuana, he also brought; a friend, a shotgun, a pistol, numerous knives and his mother and grandmother. Detectives learned that his grandmother was actually the suspect's marijuana source and discovered an additional 21.8 pounds of marijuana during a search warrant of her residence.

Yakima County HIDTA Task Force

Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA)
Law Enforcement Against Drugs (LEAD)

During November 18-20, 2009, the DEA Yakima Resident Office (RO) and the Tri-Cities Post of Duty (POD), in conjunction with ICE, ATF, and state and local law enforcement agencies from the Yakima area and the Tri-Cities area, conducted an operation, codenamed Operation Valley Thunder. Operation Valley Thunder targeted gang members in the Yakima and Tri-Cities area. The DEA Yakima RO conducted many purchases of drug evidence from different gang members and/or associates prior to the actual take down/roundup. During the operation, the agents and detectives executed a series of federal search and arrest warrants; included in the operation were multiple state search and arrest warrants also. The operation also included couple of buy-busts. Federal charges are pending in the Eastern District of Washington. The operation was a complete success due to the amount of violent gang members taken off the

streets. Many federal, state and local law enforcement agencies and departments all worked together to conduct this operation. A total of 64 individuals were arrested – 43 from the Tri-Cities area and 21 from the Yakima Valley. Agents and officers seized approximately 12 ounces of crystal methamphetamine, 5 ounces of cocaine, 6 ounces of heroin, and one indoor marijuana grow, which consisted of 16 plants. Other seizures included 9 loaded firearms (2 assault rifles, 6 semi-automatic pistols and 1 revolver). Of the 9 weapons seized, 3 of the firearms were confirmed as stolen. In addition, officers confiscated over 100 rounds of ammunition. Assets seizures included 9 vehicles, 3 stolen ATVs, a quantity of stolen construction tools and equipment, and \$14,401 in US Currency. The interagency cooperation was pivotal in the successful outcome of Operation Valley Thunder.

Tacoma Regional HIDTA Task Force

Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA)
Pierce County Sheriff's Department
Tacoma Police Department

On October 20, 2009, TNET in collaboration with the FBI and multiple state and local agencies, concluded an eighteen month DEA Tacoma RO OCDETF/PTO investigation named Operation Native Justice. Simultaneous search and arrest warrants were served in the cities of Milton, Tacoma, Puyallup, Federal Way, and Lake Tapps, for individuals and locations belonging to the Billy Flores DTO. During the takedown, agents and officers arrested Billy Flores Sr. and Bill Flores Jr., the leaders of an OxyContin distributing DTO. Four other members were arrested on federal charges. Five other targets were arrested on state charges stemming from this investigation. During the search warrants agents seized hundreds of prescription pills; including 5,400 OxyContin pills, 18 firearms, approximately \$95,000 U.S. Currency, 10 vehicles, and miscellaneous documents. All individuals arrested are currently remanded to the custody of the US Marshals following court appearances in federal court. To date, this investigation has led to

the arrest of 20 individuals on federal and state drug charges.



DEA Tacoma: Pharmaceuticals seized during Operation Native Justice.

HIDTA Integrated Task Force

DEA HIDTA Task Force 1



DEA HIDTA TF 1 worked cooperatively in targeting members of the La Familia DTO. The complete write-up is featured in the lead article section.

DEA HIDTA Transportation Group—Task Force 2



Since January 2008, the HIDTA Task Force has executed seven separate enforcement operations that resulted in the seizure of 32 indoor marijuana cultivation operations, totaling over 20,000 marijuana plants, and the arrest of 61 subjects, of which over 50 are being prosecuted in United States District Court under Operation Green Reaper. Thus far, the investigation has resulted in the seizure of the business inventories of two indoor gardening supply companies (total value of approximately \$850,000), approximately \$366,000 U.S. Currency, and the seizure of approximately 45 automobiles.

Spokane County HIDTA Task Force

Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) Spokane County Regional Task Force

Spokane County HIDTA Task Force, in cooperation with the Cheney Police Department and the Tri-Cities Metro Drug Task Force, arrested five members of a methamphetamine and cocaine trafficking organization based in Cheney, Washington. Task Force investigators made several controlled buys, conducted numerous hours of surveillance, and used other investigative techniques to develop the case. During the investigation, officers seized over ½ pound of methamphetamine, some of which reach purity levels in excess of 90%, 2 ounces of cocaine, four vehicles, and over \$10,000 in U.S. Currency. The Spokane County HIDTA Drug Task Force continues to assist the Spokane County Sheriff's Office Major Crime detectives with the homicide of known drug trafficker. The victim suffered a single small caliber gunshot wound to the back of the head. Task Force member conducted interviews, cultivated leads, and developing information. A suspect has been identified and one person has been arrested on marijuana distribution charges. Over the last month, the Spokane County HIDTA Task Force investigated a marijuana drug trafficking group. The main suspect in the case was arrested. The target had 15 large marijuana plants and just over a pound of processed marijuana at his residence. Illegitimate medical marijuana authorizations appears to be the "legalize" of choice for local marijuana traffickers seeking protection from prosecution.

US Marshals Service

During the week of November 16 2009, members of the United States Marshals Service with the help of various federal, state, and local law enforcement agencies conducted a successful warrant sweep in Whatcom County, Washington. This warrant sweep produced the apprehension of 26 fugitive felons and cleared out 42 outstanding warrants in three days. The operation members were divided into five groups and were spread throughout the county to track down fugitive sex offenders, violent offenders, and gang members. This operation was a great opportunity for law enforcement officers and analysts to successfully work together in their efforts to better the safety

Domestic Highway Enforcement Program (DHE)

of the Whatcom County community.

The DHE program continues to document and report to EPIC via the National Seizure System on all significant highway seizures in the region (Washington, Oregon, and Idaho).

NW HIDTA puts out a monthly bulletin to the law enforcement community on interdictions. The Points of Contact for the DHE program are Jodi Mahoney, National Guard Intelligence Analyst, JMahoney@nw.hidta.org and Julia Fisher, Criminal Intelligence Specialist, JFisher@nw.hidta.org.

National Marijuana Initiative (NMI)

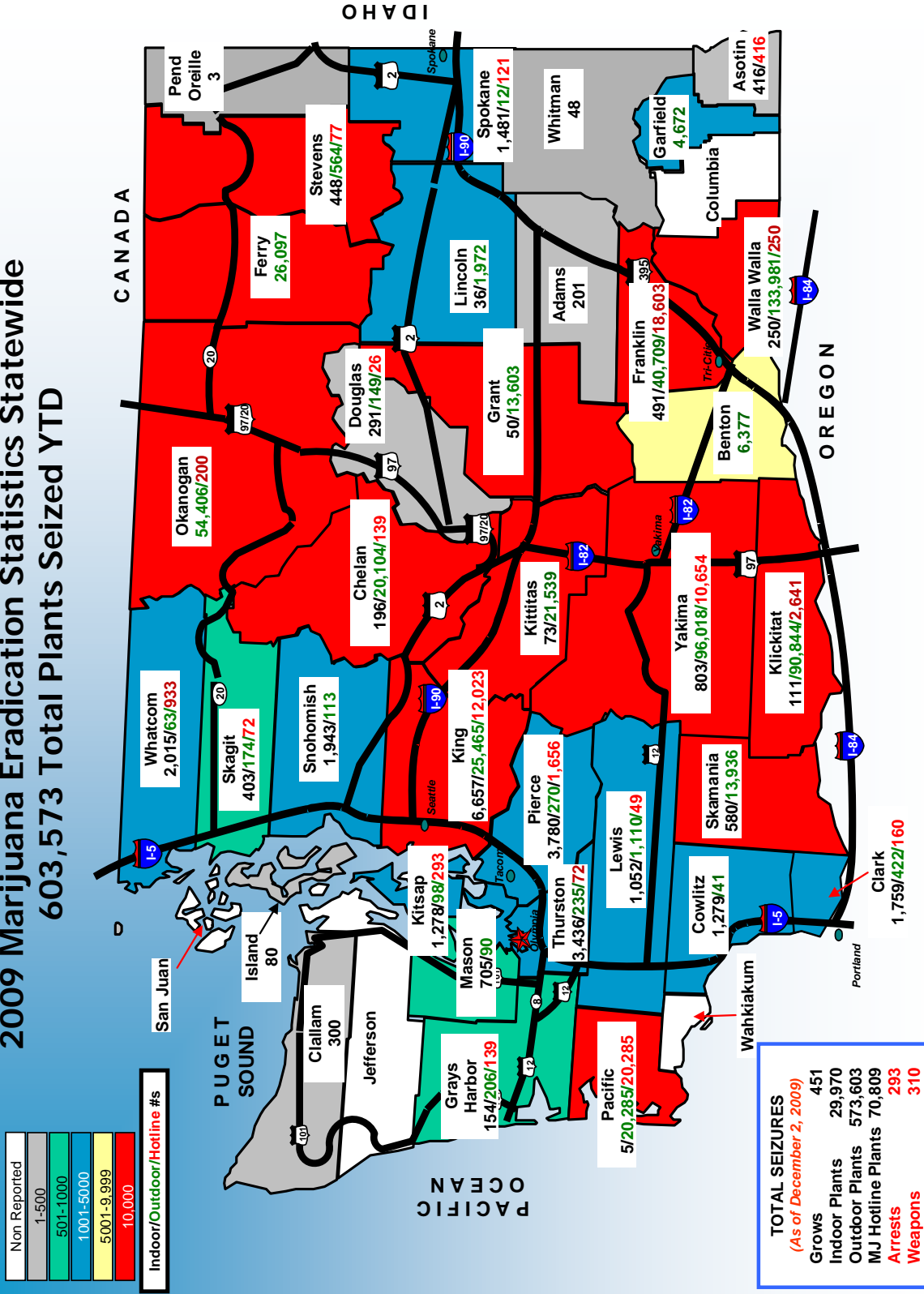
During the past growing season, agents and officers learned the following lessons regarding marijuana grow operations on public lands:

- Citizens risk encounters with armed growers when enjoying public lands within Washington.
- Extensive environmental damage is occurring across the state.
 - Hazardous chemicals from Mexico
 - Destruction of native plants & animals
 - Poisoning of ground water
- Gardens are organized by poly-drug organizations.
- Human trafficking component with illegal work in grow sites.

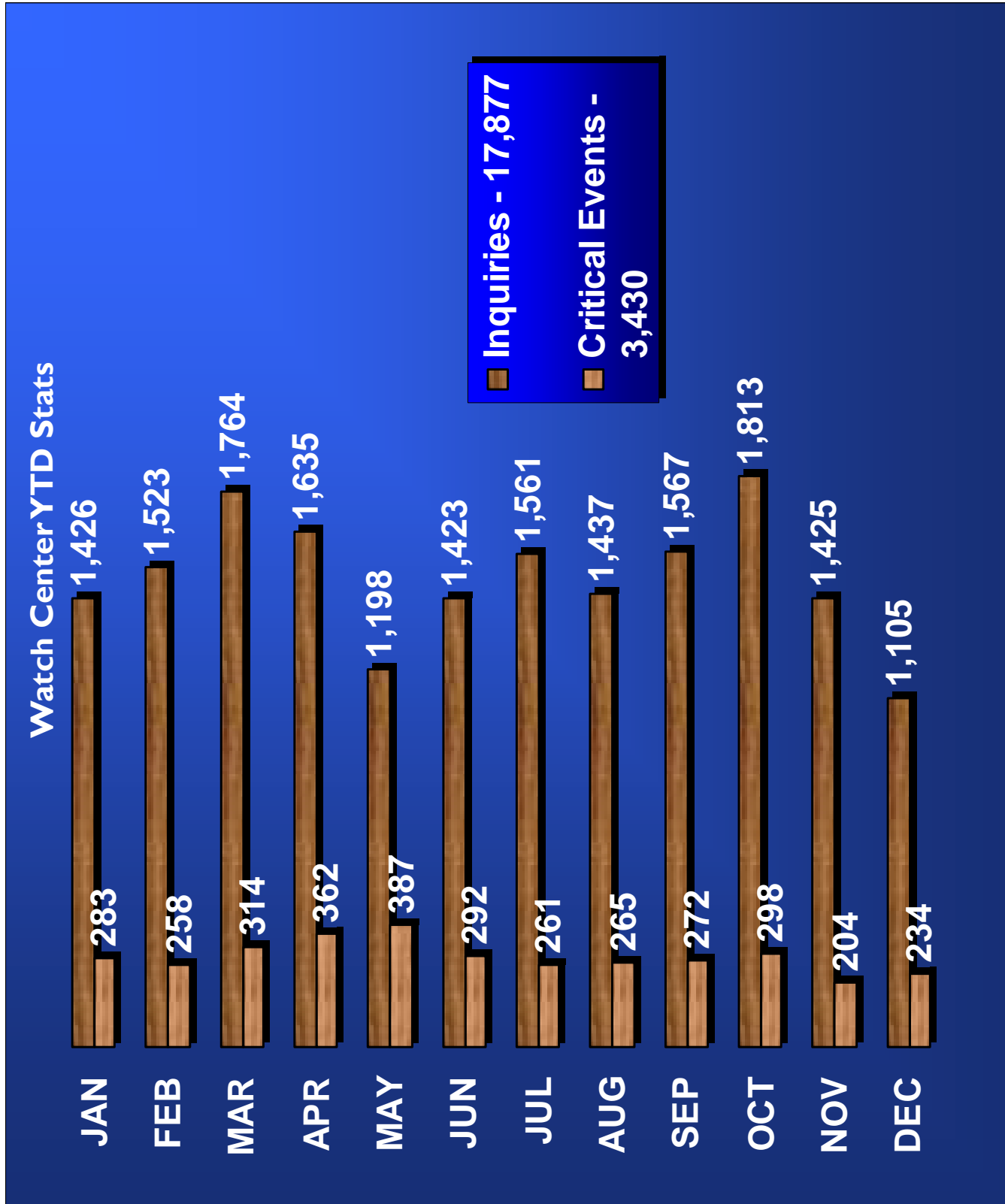


Examples of items found in an outdoor marijuana grow.
Source: Washington State Patrol

2009 Marijuana Eradication Statistics Statewide 603,573 Total Plants Seized YTD



Investigative Assistance Division



TRAINING SCHEDULE

The NW HIDTA coordinates with the National Guard Midwest Counterdrug Training Center (MCTC), National Drug Intelligence Center (NDIC), and other federal, state, and local law enforcement agencies to present these courses.

There is no cost to the attendees or their agencies, except for per diem, if applicable.

The courses are open to federal, state, and local law enforcement officers, criminal intelligence analysts, program analysts, and military personnel assigned to counter-drug activities.

For additional information on these courses please contact Bob Wicklund or Neclisa Floyd at (206) 352-3600 .

DATE	COURSE	PROVIDER	LOCATION
1/6-1/8/2010	Hidden Assets in Motor Vehicles	DEA	Centralia
1/13/2010	Wiretap 101	DEA	Seattle
1/26-1/28/2010	Indoor MJ Grow Officer Safety	MCTC	Tacoma PD
3/4-3/5/2010	Conspiracies	MCTC	Bellevue PD
3/8-3/12/2010	Interview & Interrogation	MCTC	Kent PD
3/24-3/26/2010	Basic Spanish for Probation/Parole	MCTC	Ephrata
4/6-4/7/2010	Advanced Vehicle Contraband Concealment	MCTC	Bremerton
5/18-5/20/2010	Financial Investigative Techniques	MCTFT	Bellevue PD