



8/1/24 Media Release

Nevada County Sheriff's Office Continues Crackdown on Illegal Cannabis Operations with Over 15,000 Illegal Cannabis Plants Destroyed in July

Grass Valley, CA – Members of the Nevada County Sheriff's Office (NCSO) Special Investigation Unit (SIU) executed five search warrants of properties in Nevada County this July for suspected illegal cannabis operations. In total, 15,239 illegal cannabis plants and 4,271.2 lbs. of processed cannabis were destroyed, with 36-year-old Raul Rojas Morales, of Grass Valley, arrested on July 5. His charges include illegal cannabis cultivation and six environmental felony charges.

Searches were conducted at two properties in Grass Valley on July 5 and three properties in Smartsville (Big Oak Valley) on July 30. Searches were conducted in partnership with several allied agencies in July, including California Fish and Wildlife, the Department of Cannabis Compliance, Nevada County Code Compliance, Eradication and Prevention of Illicit Cannabis (EPIC) Task Force, and the California Department of Water Resources. At all five properties, environmental crimes were uncovered. Some of the crimes included: CA Fish and Game Code 5652(a) - Trash into a Waterway; CA Fish and Game Code 5650 - Harmful Chemicals into a Waterway; and CA Fish and Game Code 1602(a) - Water Diversion. At one property in Smartsville, an unregistered firearm was also seized.

“When we clear out illegal grows, they often involve hazardous chemicals, polluted water, no running water and even human excrement,” explained NCSO Detective Martinez. “These are not clean, safe grows. These are grows that contaminate the environment and use dangerous chemicals on their plants for human consumption.”

Community members who suspect illegal grow activity are encouraged to call the Nevada County Sheriff's Office or Nevada County Code Compliance. Tips may also be submitted anonymously at <https://www.nevadacountyca.gov/192/Sheriffs-Crime-Tip-Form>

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