



Fresno County Sheriff's Department
Margaret Mims, Sheriff
News Release

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MEDIA ADVISORY: Large Marijuana Grow Eradicated

Fresno County Sheriff Margaret Mims today announced the eradication of a large marijuana grown in southwest Fresno county and the arrest of two subjects.

On June 6th, investigators from the Sheriff's Metro Narcotics Enforcement Team responded to a rugged area of Warthen Canyon, near Hwy 198 & Coalinga Mineral Springs Road.

Investigators had received information of a possible large marijuana grow in the area. The grow had been found by hunters in the area who then contacted the land owner.

Investigators had to hike for over an hour to reach the grow. Upon their arrival, they started a search of the area for possible suspects and located a campsite. As they approached the campsite, they could hear Mexican music and subjects speaking in Spanish. Investigators confronted three subjects at the campsite, all of which fled as deputies approached.

Two of the subjects were taken into custody and the third was able to escape. The arrested subjects were both armed with handguns tucked into their waistbands.

Arrested were 23 year old Fernando Pacheco and 27 year old Isidro Chavez. The investigation revealed that both suspects were from Mexico and had been in the United States for approximately one month. It was also learned that both subjects had been living at the marijuana grow since their arrival in the United States.

Both subjects were transported to the Fresno County Jail where they were booked on charges of cultivation of marijuana, possession of marijuana for sale, and being armed in the commission of a felony. Pacheco was also listed as a prior deported felon for having been convicted on weapons charges.

Investigators advised that the grow contained over 4000 plants. Had the marijuana been harvested and processed, it's street value would have been in excess of \$8,000,000.

Anyone with information regarding this case is asked to contact the Sheriff's Narcotics Unit at 452-1295, the Fresno County Sheriff's Department at 488-3111, or CrimeStoppers at 498-STOP(7867).