



# Eureka Police Department

## PRESS RELEASE

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### Eureka Police Department

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08/24/2011

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### **Subject: EPD Conducts Transient Camp Sweep**

#### **Contact:** Sergeant Steve Watson

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On 8/23/11, from about 10:00 AM to 3:45 PM, officers with the Eureka Police Department's Problem Oriented Policing Unit (POP) conducted a pre-planned transient camp sweep of greenbelt areas within the city limits. The sweep was in response to on-going, persistent citizen and business complaints associated with the numerous homeless encampments in these areas.

Over the years, these homeless encampments have been a source of numerous criminal and environmental problems, including felony and misdemeanor physical assaults, sexual assaults/rapes, arson, assaults with a deadly weapon, homicides/attempted homicides, robberies, thefts, criminal threats, aggressive dogs, and various drug related crimes among others. Another often overlooked area of great concern is the tremendous environmental damage that is being done to the marshland and streams via illegal dumping, littering, and improper human/animal waste disposal.

John Shelter of the Northcoast Resource Center runs a volunteer clean-up program called "New Directions," which frequently works with the City of Eureka/EPD in cleaning-up these camps. Shelter told officers involved with the sweep today that over the past 1 ½ years New Directions has removed approximately **128,000 pounds (64 tons)** of trash from the marshland areas within the City of Eureka. This roughly equates to the filling and removal of a 20-yard dumpster a week. Shelter attributes this garbage to illegal dumping and campers. Shelter pointed out that New Directions has also helped to relocate 42 homeless individuals to more permanent housing locations (placement with motels, assistance centers, family, friends etc.).

During the sweep, officers contacted a total of approximately 23 illegal campers in greenbelt/marshland areas along the bay from Hilfiker to West Del Norte Streets, in Cooper's Gulch, along 6<sup>th</sup> Street between T & V Streets, behind the Humboldt County Library, in the 2200 block of 4<sup>th</sup> Street, and in the Henderson/Fairfield area above Broadway. 4 subjects who had been previously warned or cited for camping were issued citations for illegal camping (E.M.C. section 93.02(A)) and admonished to move or they would face arrest for trespassing. Additionally, one of the subjects was also cited and released on an infraction warrant for camping. The others were given verbal and/or written warnings to vacate the area.



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## **PRESS RELEASE**

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EPD's new Homeless Liaison, Pamlyn Millsap, accompanied officers during the sweep and offered "linkage and referral" services to those who were contacted. This included giving the individuals information about the local resources and services available to them.

Additional clean-up and enforcement efforts are planned for the coming weeks.

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