



HUMBOLDT COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

William F. Honsal, Sheriff

Media Release

Date: 7/25/2018

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Case Number: 201803655

Subject: 14K cannabis plants eradicated in Briceland area

On July 24, 2018, deputies with the Humboldt County Sheriff's Office Drug Enforcement Unit (DEU) served three search warrants to investigate illegal cannabis cultivation in Southern Humboldt. The following agencies assisted in the service of the warrants: California Department of Fish and Wildlife, Humboldt County Environmental Health and HAZMAT Unit, California State Water Board and Humboldt County Planning and Building Department. Three parcels were investigated during the service of the warrants.

Two parcels investigated were located on Blue Slide Creek Road in the Briceland area. The parcels did not possess nor were in the process of actively obtaining a commercial cannabis permit with the County of Humboldt.

During the service of the two warrants, deputies eradicated approximately 14,289 growing cannabis plants. Deputies also seized and destroyed approximately 1,030 pounds of processed cannabis and approximately 96 pounds of cannabis shake.

Between the two parcels, assisting agencies found the following violations:

- Seven stream crossing violations (up to \$8,000 fine per day, per violation)
- Three water diversion violations (up to \$8,000 fine per day, per violation)
- Two water pollution violations (up to \$20,000 fine per day, per violation)
- Failure to prevent a hazardous waste release (up to \$70,000 fine per day)
- Mismanagement of hazardous waste (up to \$70,000 fine per day)
- Failure to create and file a hazmat business plan (up to \$70,000 fine per day)
- Failure to take spill prevention control or counter measures (up to \$70,000 fine per day)
- Failure to have secondary containment on a diesel tank (up to \$70,000 fine per day)
- Commercial cannabis ordinance violations (up to \$10,000 fine per day)
- Improper storage and removal of solid waste violation (up to \$25,000 fine per day)
- Grading without a permit violations (up to \$10,000 fine per day, per violation)
- Building code violations (up to \$10,000 fine per day, per violation)

Aaron David Lieberman, 32, of Bayside, was arrested and booked into the Humboldt County Correctional Facility on charges of unauthorized cannabis cultivation and processing, streambed alteration and depositing hazardous materials into a waterway.

One parcel investigated was located in the Panther Gap area of Honeydew. Upon arrival, deputies learned that this parcel was currently in compliance with the local medical marijuana cultivation ordinance. No cannabis plants were eradicated at this site.

Assisting agencies found the following violations at this parcel:

- Seven stream crossing violations (up to \$8,000 fine per day, per violation)
- Five water pollution violations (up to \$20,000 fine per day, per violation)
- 10 suspected dredge or fill of waters of the United States violations (up to \$10,000 fine per day, per violation)
- Five failure to file a report of discharge into state waters violations (up to \$5,000 fine per day, per violation)

Additional violations associated with the three parcels are expected to be filed by the assisting agencies.

Anyone with information about these cases or related criminal activity is encouraged to call the Sheriff's Office at (707) 445-7251 or the Sheriff's Office Crime Tip line at (707) 268-2539.











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