



20 YEARS OF VOLUNTEER SERVICE TO STATE AND NATION

The Informer

The Tennessee National Guard Counterdrug Task Force



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Making a Difference in Tennessee

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OPERATION: CHEROKEE

National Guard, Forest Service Clean Up Marijuana "Trash" Site

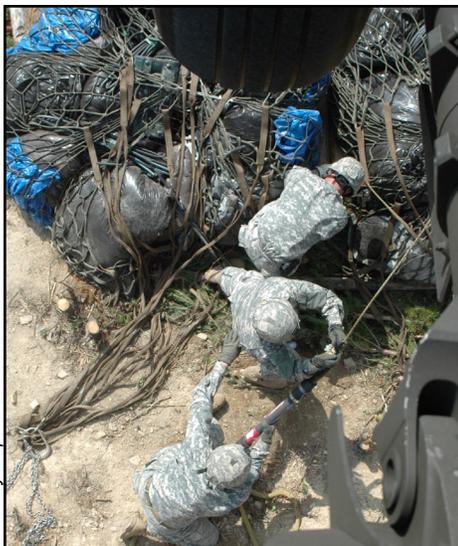
By Terry McDonald
US Forest Service Public Affairs

The United States Forest Service, with support from the Tennessee National Guard Counterdrug Task Force, rehabilitated a remote area in the Cherokee National Forest that was recently used for a large marijuana growing operation. Fourteen National Guardsmen from the Counterdrug Task Force assisted Forest Service representatives with removing significant amounts of trash and debris from the site, as well as performing various tasks to restore the area to a more natural condition.



A UH-60 Blackhawk from the 230th Air Cav Squadron prepares to lift off with trash in tow.

Photo by Capt. Jay Richards



Counterdrug soldiers hook up the sling load as seen from the aircraft above.

Photo by Capt. David Roberts

Debris from the site was transported by a National Guard UH-60 helicopter (230th Air Cavalry Squadron – Smyrna, TN) to the National Guard Armory in Newport where it was properly disposed of. Approximately 800 hundred pounds of debris was removed from the site.

The Governor's Task Force on Marijuana Eradication initially discovered the illegal operation in June when it eradicated 357,500 marijuana plants. The Governor's Task Force is made up of agencies that include the Tennessee Bureau of Investigation, Tennessee Highway Patrol, Alcoholic Beverage Commission, Tennessee National Guard and is also supported by the Drug Enforcement Administration. (Cont. on Page 2)



Photo by Capt. Jay Richards

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“Trash” Cont. from Pg.1

Lt. Col. Byron Deel, Commander of the Tennessee National Guard Counterdrug Task Force said, “Our unit specializes in supporting drug law enforcement activities. Unfortunately, we’re seeing an increase in illegal drug activity on public land. We were pleased to provide support to the Forest Service in restoring the area that was impacted by the illegal drug operation. It was a very worthwhile project for us.”



National Guardsmen and US Forest Service personnel clean and clear the pick up zone



Some of the trash left by members of a drug trafficking organization who were living on the site.

Law enforcement officials report that marijuana cultivation and other illegal drug activities have increased in recent years on National Forest System land nationwide. Many of the areas where this type of activity occurs are remote and relatively inaccessible. Forest Service Supervisory Special Agent, Russ Arthur said, “Unfortunately we’re seeing more illegal drug activity in our national forests. Our goal is to continue to provide a safe and enjoyable place for national forest visitors. Interagency cooperation is a key to meeting this goal. State and local law enforcement agencies and entities such as the Governor’s task Force on Marijuana Eradication and the National Guard Counterdrug Task Force play a critical role in denying illegal use of our public lands.”

Special Agent Russ added, “We couldn’t do it without the kind of cooperation we’ve seen on this project. The Governor’s Task Force’s initial actions and now the National Guard’s efforts have been vital to the success of this operation.”



230th AIR CAV

The Counterdrug Task Force extends a special thank you to the soldiers of the 230th Air Cavalry Squadron whose support made this mission possible.



Approximately 800 pounds of trash and debris was air lifted to the Newport Armory where it was properly disposed of.

Photo by Capt. David Roberts

DRUG DEMAND REDUCTION

Marshall County Students Get Lesson on the Dangers of Drug Impairment

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Spec. King talks with middle school students about the dangers of drugs.

By Spec. Alan King
Drug Demand Reduction

I recently had the opportunity to visit Marshall County Elementary School. This was a general drug presentation for the school for Red Ribbon Week. After the presentation, I let the students try the fatal vision goggles. The goggles distort their depth perception as if impaired by drugs and alcohol. This really makes an impact when they try to do simple tasks like tying their shoes or catching a ball. The whole experience helps drive home how dangerous it is if you were driving while impaired.



"Your Attention Please..."

Specialist Shironda Jones instructs students from Crestview Middle school in Tipton County on conducting the Mobile Team challenge. "It was great, the children really seemed motivated to work together and get the task done", Jones said. "I even had teachers getting involved". The Mobile Team Challenge teaches students the importance of working together as well as other life skills as they relate to a drug-free life.

FY 2009 STATS

Tennesseans Reached
From Oct 08 to Nov 08

Elementary School.....	5,587
Middle School.....	16,836
High School.....	2,371
College/University.....	309
Adults.....	3,679
Total.....	28,782

DRUG SUPPLY REDUCTION

Names of personnel and locations are withheld for operational security

OPERATION: GREEN SWEEP Finds Marijuana, Meth, and Moonshine

By Capt. David Roberts
Counterdrug Public Affairs

THE SEARCH

Several months ago, our Ground Interdiction Team received a request for help from the Macon County Sheriff's Department. The detective in charge of the case had information about several marijuana patches in his county and needed help finding them. The operation to find the plants and its owners was dubbed "Green Sweep".

Ground Team personnel loaded up their four wheelers, and met up with sheriff's deputies to conduct the search. Through terrain analysis, the teams were able to narrow the search location, and several hours later their hard work paid off with the discovery of three marijuana patches with approximately 700 plants.



Some of the marijuana found during the search.

FY 2009 SEIZURES

From Oct 2008 to Nov 2008

** Seizure information is from drug cases that were supported by the Counterdrug Task Force through Criminal Analysis, Ground or Aerial Reconnaissance.

Cocaine (lbs.).....	16.87
Crack Cocaine (lbs.)04
Meth (lbs.).....	5.11
Meth Labs.....	46
Heroin (lbs.).....	2.09
Khat (lbs.).....	85.45
Arrests.....	89
Vehicles.....	9
Weapons.....	41
Proc. Marijuana (lbs.).....	461.6
Marijuana (Plants).....	984
Currency.....	\$772,744



THE STAKE OUT

Then came phase II of the operation. The sheriff was determined to catch those involved, but had limited manpower and equipment. Team members then switched their support focus to reconnaissance. To help keep an eye on the patch, they installed a "Ground Hog" camera. The camera is partially buried in the ground and camouflaged to prevent detection, and a motion sensor triggers the camera to record. Ground Team members stood watch over one patch with deputies while the Ground Hog watched the others.

THE SEIZURE

During the operation, some of the trails led from one of the marijuana patches to even more marijuana located on the property of a suspect. A search warrant was obtained and a search conducted. A total of 112 marijuana plants were confiscated during this search. Deputies also found two meth labs that were being operated out of campers and a moonshine still.

A WORD OF THANKS

The following is taken from a letter to our ground team from the detective in charge of the case.

"First let me say that I appreciate, no WE appreciate everything that the Counter-Drug Task Force has done to assist us in these investigations. Without your help, be it through equipment or manpower, this investigation would not have progressed to this level this quickly. Again, thank you for all of your help on this investigation and we look forward to using one of the best assets we have found, and who are willing to help."

