



City of Arts & Innovation

# PRESS RELEASE

**Police Department**  
**SERGIO G. DIAZ**  
**Chief of Police**

## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

August 21, 2018

### **CONTACT:**

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## **MARIJUANA CULTIVATION DISCOVERED AT RIVER BOTTOM HOMELESS ENCAMPMENT**

RIVERSIDE, CA – This morning around 9:00 a.m. on August 21, 2018, the Riverside Police Department conducted a coordinated effort to remove an illegal marijuana cultivation operation in the Santa Ana River bottom. This took place amidst a heavily wooded area just north of Martha McLean-Anza Narrows Park. The marijuana cultivation site was discovered as the result of a call for police service regarding a subject brandishing a firearm on Saturday, August 18<sup>th</sup>, around 5:30 p.m. When patrol officers arrived to that call, they initiated a search for the described suspect in this area. Although the suspect was not found, officers did discover several very large marijuana plants within a homeless encampment. The information was given to Riverside Police Department's Narcotics Unit who organized today's follow-up investigation and operation.

Due to the nature of the original call that uncovered this cultivation site, along with other recent acts of violence that have taken place within the Santa Ana River bottom area, the Riverside Police Department's METRO Team (SWAT) was utilized to assure the safety of those involved and the removal of the marijuana cultivation operation. Weapons, along with evidence of the construction of improvised security devices, such as booby traps, were discovered at the encampment. During the search, two people were detained, identified, and later released pending further investigation.

Ultimately, about 30 mature marijuana plants, many over 10-feet tall and with a combined weight of approximately 500 pounds, were removed from the location.

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Had the marijuana reached harvest and sale, its street value is estimated in the tens of thousands of dollars.

This operation was a successful collaborative effort by multiple teams within the City of Riverside that included the Police Department's METRO Team, Narcotics Unit, Technical Services Unit, Field Operations, Problem Oriented Policing Team, Property Unit, the Public Works Department's Forestry & Landscape, and the Inland Empire Landscape. Members from each of these teams participated and contributed to the operation's success.

Anyone with information regarding this investigation is urged to contact Detective M. Bucy at (951) 353-7221 or [mbucy@riversideca.gov](mailto:mbucy@riversideca.gov). Those wishing to remain anonymous can email [rpdtips@riversideca.gov](mailto:rpdtips@riversideca.gov) or utilize the Riverside Police Department's mobile app "Submit a Tip" feature while referencing incident number P18156761.

## P18156761 ##