



EASTERN DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA CENTRAL VALLEY JOINT FUGITIVE TASK FORCE

For Immediate Press Release
July 1, 2011

Contact: Eastern District of California
Deputy Jason Ferrell
(559)487-5559

Tehachapi – U.S. Marshal Albert Najera, of the Eastern District of California, announced today that the U.S. Marshals Central Valley Joint Fugitive Task Force (CVJFTF) arrested Mitchell Dennis Knox.

On June 30, 2011, the Joint Support Operations Center (JSOC), in ATF Headquarters, received information about the possible whereabouts of Mitchell Knox who was a fugitive from Operation Woodchuck. This was a year-long investigation that included an undercover ATF agent infiltrating a group of criminals who were selling illegal firearms and narcotics in the San Fernando Valley. During the course of the investigation, ATF undercover agents purchased stolen firearms, machine guns and silencers. Other agencies participating in Operation Woodchuck were the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (CDCR), Office of Correctional Safety-Special Service Unit (CDCR-SSU), and the Los Angeles Police Department.

The information from JSOC was provided to the local ATF field office in Fresno, CA. The Fresno ATF agents have been invaluable participants on the U.S. Marshals Central Valley Joint Fugitive Task Force (CVJFTF) in the Eastern District of California. On the same day the tip was received, members of the CVJFTF traveled the 135 miles from Fresno to Tehachapi in an effort to track down Knox. The task force, along with the Kern County Sheriff's Department, responded to a remote location in the foot-hills of Tehachapi. The team was able to locate a residence where the subject was possibly staying. Deputies tactically approached the residence and observed the subject standing near the front door. The fugitive was then ordered to the ground where he was placed under arrest for the outstanding charges. Knox was also charged with possession of a stolen vehicle and stolen property at the time of the arrest.

Referring to the collaborative effort between the United States Marshals, ATF, and the JSOC, John A. Torres, ATF Special Agent in Charge, Southern California said, "This was efficient police work at its best." He also went on to say, "This goes to show you that you can't outrun the long arm of the law!"

The Central Valley Joint Fugitive Task Force is a U.S. Marshals-sponsored partnership comprised of investigators from federal, state, and local agencies. The main objective of the task force is to seek out and arrest fugitives charged with violent crimes, drug crimes, sex offenders, and other felonies. More fugitives are arrested by the U.S. Marshals Service than all other federal agencies combined. In 2009 investigations carried out by the U.S. Marshals Service resulted in the apprehension of over 36,000 federal fugitives and more than 90,000 state and local fugitives on felony charges.