Indian Affairs - Office of Public Affairs

82.8 pounds of methamphetamine, 2.4 pounds of heroin, and 2,000 THC Concentrate cigarette cartridges seized

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WASHINGTON - Today, Secretary of the Interior David Bernhardt highlighted another successful seizure of narcotics. While on patrol near the exterior boundaries of the Laguna Indian Reservation in New Mexico, a Bureau of Indian Affairs K-9 police unit arrested an individual and seized 85 pounds of narcotics worth more than $4 million dollars.

The K-9 police unit seized:

- 82.8 pounds (37,578.75 grams) of methamphetamine with a street value of $3,795,454;
- 2.44 pounds (1,110.58 grams) of heroin with a street value of $162,145; and
- 2,000 THC Concentrate cigarette cartridges with a retail value of $90,000

“I commend the Bureau of Indian Affairs’ law enforcement team and all of the dedicated men and women in uniform who protect Indian Country.” said **Secretary Bernhardt.** “The President has made it a priority to keep our communities safe and drug free. By working alongside our Native communities and other partners, we are doing everything we can to get these drugs off the streets; today’s announcement is another example of that progress.”

“I applaud the exemplary service demonstrated by K-9 Police Officer Nicholas Jackson and K-9 Kofi to safeguard our Nation’s communities, both tribal and non-tribal, from these addictive poisons, valued at more than 4 million dollars,” said **Assistant Secretary Tara Katuk Sweeney.** “The Interstates paved through our tribal lands are not save havens for drug runners. I am proud of the Bureau of Indian Affairs Office of Justice Services law enforcement officers for standing watch and making arrests.”

“Our BIA-OJS Officers continue to stand vigilant and ready to respond to any drug trafficking operations moving through Indian Country and I am proud of Officer Nick Jackson and K-9 Kofi’s for their continued success as a team,” said **BIA-OJS Director Charles Addington.** “Our BIA and Tribal law enforcement officers do an awesome job and are proud to serve and protect tribal communities every day.”

BACKGROUND

In FY 2018, the BIA-OJS led 15 operations in seven states, resulting in a total of 372 arrests and the total seizure of over 3,200 pounds of illegal narcotics with an estimated street value of approximately $9.8 million dollars.

Other Recent Seizures

Arizona –The Department’s Joint Task Force on Opioid Reduction seized approximately 30,000 fentanyl

pills and more than a hundred thousand dollars' worth of other illegal drugs during an operation in Arizona. This operation was related to a Bureau of Indian Affairs Drug Enforcement joint investigation into large amounts of fentanyl pills from a Mexican drug trafficking organization being transported into the U.S. through Points of Entry located on the Tohono O'odham Nation.

New Mexico – A Bureau of Indian Affairs K-9 unit was patrolling the interstate on the Laguna Pueblo when he conducted a traffic stop. Upon searching the vehicle, the BIA K-9 officer detected several packages containing more than $230,000 worth of marijuana and THC Concentrate.

Arizona – In February, the Opioid Task Force conducted a Criminal Interdiction Operation focused on areas known for high drug trafficking in and around the San Carlos Apache Reservation in Arizona. The DOI Opioid Task Force consisted of Special Agents from the Bureau of Indian Affairs, Division of Drug Enforcement and BIA K-9 uniformed officers, the San Carlos Apache Police Department, and the Bureau of Land Management. This operation capped a lengthy, two phased enforcement effort aimed at dismantling and disrupting the drug distribution networks targeting the San Carlos Apache Reservation. These investigations resulted in the combined purchase and seizure of approximately 417 grams of methamphetamine – estimated street value of $27,060 – which ultimately resulted in eighteen Federal Indictments.

Washington - A February 28 operation on the Spokane Reservation in Washington also resulted in the seizure of more than $200,000 worth of heroin and methamphetamine and two non-Indian subjects were arrested. On March 13, 2019, BIA Drug Enforcement, DEA, US Border Patrol and Mattawa Police Department seized approximately 2,107 grams (4.6 pounds) of methamphetamine from a residence known to be a source of supply to reservations in Washington State. The illegal narcotics seized had an estimated street value of approximately $105,350.

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