



SANTA CRUZ POLICE DEPARTMENT
155 Center Street, Santa Cruz, CA 95060

MEDIA RELEASE



DATE/TIME: August 23, 2013

TOPIC: Gang Drug Sales Crackdown and Arrests

INFORMATION:

Over the past 3 months the Santa Cruz Police Department in conjunction with the Santa Cruz Anti-Crime Team, Santa Cruz County Sheriff, and The U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration have conducted an enforcement operation designed to target street-level drug sales by gangs in the Beach Flats neighborhood. The objective was to disrupt the gang's ability to control the neighborhood streets through drug sales and intimidation as well as impact a significant funding source for the gang.

A variety of techniques were used in the investigation to include undercover drug buys, surveillance and informants. The investigation identified 7 people who were instrumental in the street-level drug sales. Four of the seven individuals are known and confirmed Sureno gang members. While the remaining three were not gang members, they were part of the network of street-level drug sales and neighborhood intimidation. The arrested individuals are:

Juan Armando Silva – 26 yrs, Santa Cruz resident
Drug Sales
Sureno gang member

Manuel Huerta Silva – 27 yrs, Santa Cruz resident
Drug Sales, Drug Possession
Sureno gang member

Andrew Villa – 18 yrs, Santa Cruz resident
Drug Sales
Sureno gang member

Jeremy Ochoa – 32 yrs, Aptos Resident
Drug Sales

Rene Perez Mendoza – 31 yrs, Santa Cruz Resident
Drug Sales

Edward Lujan – 43 yrs, Santa Cruz Resident
Drug Possession with Intent to Distribute, Firearms Possession

Additionally, an unnamed 17 year old juvenile, confirmed Sureno gang member on drug sales charges.

The suspects have been arrested over the last two months of this program. In addition to the drug sales charges, appropriate gang enhancements were added. Their cases are currently winding their way through the Santa Cruz County courts. Their photos are included on the following pages.

The Santa Cruz Police Department will continue to use a variety of tactics to disrupt the gang and drug sales activity in and around the Beach Flats area. Additionally, the Santa Cruz County Anti-Crime Team encourages anyone who has information about these cases or other drug related cases to call the SCCACT TIP LINE at 831-454-2320 to report information.

For additional information, contact: Deputy Chief Steve Clark

Phone: (831) 420-5815

Photos to follow

Juan Armando Silva



Manuel Huerta Silva



Andrew Villa



Jeremy Ochoa



Rene Perez Mendoza



Edward Lujan

