



U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

*Hanford Reach National Monument  
Saddle Mountain National Wildlife Refuge*

*... protecting the last of the free-flowing Columbia River.*



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## **Interagency Cooperation helps to give Officers the Tools They Need to Protect Monument Resources**

On patrol at Hanford Reach National Monument means being responsible for visitor safety and resource protection on 196,000 acres of remote shrub-steppe and 51 miles of free-flowing Columbia river. Other state and regional law enforcement agencies are facing similar situations. Such an extreme task led Monument Law Enforcement Officer Russell Haskett to organize and lead three inter-agency cooperative efforts that are paying off in big ways.

In the Summer of 2005, coordination with the Drug Enforcement Administration's aerial marijuana spotter training program and tips from the public resulted in the discovery of four illegal marijuana gardens on Monument lands. As water is a premium in the Columbia basin, the agronomists cultivated their crops near wetlands created by the return of irrigation waters from the South Columbia Basin Irrigation District. Three of the gardens occurred in areas open to the public.

Officer Haskett, two other Refuge Officers, and one Zone Law enforcement Officer conducted surveillance and reconnaissance for several days in preparation for the approximately fifty officers from Drug Enforcement Administration, USFWS, Washington State Police, Grant and Franklin County Sheriffs, and the Tri-City Metro Task Force that participated in the eradication effort. The four separate gardens, with a total of 10,560 plants, had an estimated street value of \$23,340,000.00.

Interagency cooperation went to work again during waterfowl hunting season in December and January with two emphasis patrols in the Columbia basin. The first patrol included public and private lands in Benton, Franklin, Yakima, Walla Walla, Adams, and Grant Counties and the Monument, Columbia NWR, and the Mid-Columbia NWR Complex in Washington. The second patrol added the Oregon side of the Columbia River and the Umatilla NWR.

The first patrol included 13 officers from Washington Department of Fish & Wildlife (WDFW), 3 refuge officers, and one USFWS special agent and the second patrol consisted of 8 WDFW officers, 6 Oregon State Police officers, 3 refuge officers, and 5 USFWS special agents (2 from Washington, 3 from Oregon). In total, 635 field contacts were made resulting in 76 federal and state citations being issued. Overall, approximately 88% of waterfowl hunters were in compliance with state and federal regulations.

From marijuana eradication to waterfowl patrols, these are excellent examples of inter- and intra-agency cooperation for natural resource protection and the maintenance of public safety.