



**U.S. Department of Justice  
U.S. Attorney's Office  
Western District of Texas**

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**FEDERAL JURY CONVICTS FORMER BORDER PATROL AGENT  
OF CONSPIRACY TO POSSESS WITH INTENT TO DISTRIBUTE  
OVER 1000 KILOGRAMS OF MARIJUANA**

**John E. Murphy, Acting United States Attorney**, announced that a federal jury in Del Rio, Texas, this afternoon found 24-year-old Raquel Esquivel, a former Del Rio sector Border Patrol agent, guilty of conspiring to possess with intent to distribute over 1,000 kilograms of marijuana. As a result, Esquivel faces not less than ten years, and as much as life, in federal prison.

Evidence presented during trial revealed that in 2007, Esquivel joined a drug trafficking conspiracy, which began in May 2006, and provided organizers with sensitive law enforcement information to facilitate the successful smuggling of marijuana into the United States. Prior to transporting shipments of marijuana on October 8-9, October 29-30, and December 1, 2007, co-defendants would contact Esquivel at which time she would give them specific information regarding any ongoing law enforcement operations on the Pecos river and local highways all in an effort to evade law enforcement. Esquivel also provided information to organizers on specific techniques and strategies utilized by Border Patrol so that co-conspirators would look less suspicious when transporting marijuana on the Pecos river.

Sentencing for Esquivel is scheduled for 1:20 p.m. on November 30, 2009, before United States District Judge Alia Ludlum in Del Rio.

Three Del Rio residents and co-defendants—Diego Esquivel, Ramon Patuel and Shannon Pierce—face between ten years and life in federal prison after pleading guilty to the same conspiracy charge prior to jury selection. Each defendant remains in custody pending sentencing: Esquivel on May 8, 2009; Patuel on July 16, 2009; and, Pierce on December 29, 2009.

This case was investigated by agents with the United States Immigration and Customs Enforcement Office of Professional Responsibility, the United States Immigration and Customs Enforcement Office of Investigations, and Drug Enforcement Administration. Assistant United States Attorneys Rick Bennett and Jay Combs prosecuted this case on behalf of the Government.

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