

# ***NEWS RELEASE***

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***For Immediate Release***

## **U.S. DRUG TRANSPORTATION MANAGER CONNECTED TO NARCOTICS TUNNEL SENTENCED TO 25 YEARS**

**NEWS RELEASE SUMMARY** - January 30, 2012

United States Attorney Laura E. Duffy announced that Fernando Javier Alarid, of Chula Vista, California, was sentenced to serve 25 years in federal custody by the Honorable Larry A. Burns, United States District Court Judge, after a federal jury convicted Fernando Javier Alarid of conspiracy to distribute marijuana, in violation of Title 21, United States Code, Sections 841 and 846; conspiracy to import marijuana, in violation of Title 21, United States Code, Sections, 952, 960, and 963 and possession with intent to distribute marijuana, and aiding and abetting in violation of Title 21, United States Code, Section 841(a)(1) and Title 18, United States Code, Section 2.

The four-day federal jury trial ended on June 17, 2011, with guilty verdicts on all counts. Codefendant Pablo Anzaldo-Contreras, of El Monte, California, was also convicted by the jury of all three counts and is currently serving a 235-month sentence imposed by Judge Burns on October 5, 2011.

According to court records and trial testimony, Fernando Alarid, Pablo Anzaldo, and others were arrested following the discovery of a narcotics tunnel at 9948 Via De La Amistad, San Diego, California, a warehouse located in the Otay Mesa area. Special Agents with Immigration and Customs Enforcement's (ICE) Homeland Security Investigations (HSI) and Border Patrol agents, who are part of the San Diego Tunnel Task Force, found approximately 11,975 kilograms of marijuana inside the Via De La Amistad warehouse. Also arrested during the investigation was Carlos Cunningham who drove a tractor-trailer containing approximately 8,835 kilograms of marijuana. Carlos Cunningham was sentenced to serve 260-months in custody on August 25, 2011. The retail value of the marijuana seized on November 2, 2010, was approximately \$43 million dollars.

During the sentencing hearing today, Judge Burns imposed a four-level upward adjustment for Alarid's managerial role in the offense in that he managed the crew responsible for transporting the marijuana from the Otay Mesa area to Fontana, California. As noted during the trial and by the Court, Fernando Alarid recruited the drug transportation team, purchased the truck and tractor used to transport the marijuana loads, and purchased the forklift and thousands of boxes used for transporting the marijuana from the tunnel inside the warehouse.

United States Attorney Duffy praised the San Diego Tunnel Task Force led by ICE's HSI Special Agents and comprised of other federal agencies, including U.S. Border Patrol, Drug Enforcement Administration, and other local agencies for the coordinated team effort in the culmination of this investigation and prosecution of several members of the transportation team.

## **DEFENDANT**

Fernando Javier Alarid                      Case Number: 11CR1447LAB  
In Custody - Serving 300 months in custody

Pablo Anzaldo-Contreras                      Case Number: 11CR1447LAB  
In Custody - Serving 235 months in custody

## **SUMMARY OF CHARGE AS TO FERNANDO ALARID**

Conspiracy to Distribute Marijuana

Title 21, United States Code, Sections 841, 846, and 851

Conspiracy to Import Marijuana

Title 21, United States Code, Sections 952, 960, 963, and 851

Possession With Intent To Distribute and Aiding and Abetting

Title 21, United States Code, Sections 841 and 851 and Title 18, United States Code, Section 2

### **SUMMARY OF CHARGE AS TO PABLO ANZALDO**

Conspiracy to Distribute Marijuana

Title 21, United States Code, Sections 841 and 846

Conspiracy to Import Marijuana

Title 21, United States Code, Sections 952, 960, and 963

Possession With Intent To Distribute and Aiding and Abetting

Title 21, United States Code, Section 841 and Title 18, United States Code, Section 2

### **PARTICIPATING AGENCIES**

Immigration and Customs Enforcement's Homeland Security Investigations

San Diego Tunnel Task Force

Customs and Border Protection, United States Border Patrol