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> Testimony of Dave Rodriguez Director, Northwest High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area (HIDTA)

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Chairman Johnson, distinguished members of this committee, my name is Dave Rodriguez and I have been the director of the Northwest HIDTA since June 1997. I first would like to thank the committee for its attention to exploring <u>the national security threats facing our northern border</u>. Additionally I wish to thank you for this opportunity for input from the Northwest HIDTA Program.

The Northwest High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area (HIDTA) incorporates 14 counties located on both the east and west sides of the Cascade Mountains. The western counties extend from the United States (US)-Canada border south to the Oregon border and include Clark, Cowlitz, King, Kitsap, Lewis, Pierce, Skagit, Snohomish, Thurston, and Whatcom County. The Eastern Washington counties include Benton, Franklin, Spokane, and Yakima. Within these vastly divergent jurisdictions, the Northwest HIDTA facilitates cooperation and joint efforts among more than 115 international, federal, state, local, and tribal law enforcement agencies. The Northwest HIDTA works with these agencies to identify drug threats and implement the strategies necessary to address them.

Washington's topography and location render it conducive to drug smuggling and production. The Washington section of the US-Canada border is approximately 430 miles in length, with 13 official ports of entry (POE). A significant portion of the international border is located in remote, dense forest. To the east, the state is bordered by Idaho, which includes several waterways. To the west, Washington has 157 miles of coastline on the Pacific Ocean from the southern border with Oregon to the northern international border with Canada. The San Juan archipelago, which includes the Gulf Islands of British Columbia, contains more than 700 islands and reefs.

The Cascade Range, which divides the state geographically north to south, is rugged and remote with limited border controls. The Cascades entail the majority of the forested land, extending from the international border south to the state line with Oregon at the Columbia River Gorge. Many large, secluded tracts of forest are held privately in addition to large public parks and state reserves. East of the Cascades, the topography differs significantly with vast agricultural areas, plains, prairies and sparse forests.

The mission of the HIDTA program is to enhance and coordinate America's drug control efforts among federal, state, local, and tribal law enforcement agencies in order to eliminate or reduce drug trafficking and its harmful consequences in critical regions of the United States. HIDTA regions are comprised of specific, designated counties, based on the drug threats facing the area. Washington is a distribution center for both licit and illicit commodities within the Northwest due largely to its geographic location—bordered by Canada and situated on the Pacific Ocean and its multifaceted transportation infrastructure. Private vehicles including rental vehicles, boats, and commercial trucks are used frequently to smuggle and transport drugs and illicit funds into and throughout the state. To a lesser extent, traffickers are also using couriers on commercial and private aircraft and boats, commercial buses, passenger rail cars, couriers on foot and parcel. The occurrence of couriers on foot is most prevalent along the international border.

Public lands that are adjacent to the US-Canada border also serve as routes for drug, precursor chemical, firearms and currency smuggling. Other threats to the United States' northern border include illegal alien entry and threats relating to terrorist activities.

We are also in support of the National Northern Border Counternarcotic Strategy and its strategic goal to substantially reduce the flow of illicit drugs and drug proceeds along the Northern Border and its five strategic objectives.



NORTHWEST HIGH INTENSITY DRUG TRAFFICKING AREA



Washington State 2015 Northern Border Report

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Executive Summary

Transnational Criminal Organizations (TCOs) operating on both sides of the United States and Canada border continue to move proceeds from illegal drugs sold in the United States and Canada and to transport drugs, weapons, and bulk cash. These organizations include independent Caucasian groups, ethnic East Indians (Indo-Canadians) some of whom own/operate commercial and cargo trucking companies, Asian Organized Crime (OC) groups, and members of the Hells Angels Motorcycle Club (HAMC). Most notably and prominent are the Mexican National drug trafficking (DTO) organizations, particularly those headed by Consolidated Priority Organization Targets (CPOT) which have gained a foothold in the Pacific Northwest and British Columbia (BC), Canada. U.S. and Canadian law enforcement agencies along the Washington-British Columbia border have strong partnerships and established intelligence-sharing programs, leading to the Pacific Region being considered a best practice model for international cooperation.

The Interstate 5 (I-5) corridor is the main transportation route into the Pacific Northwest (PacNW) region and into BC, Canada. Interceptions of smuggled drugs occur at both the designated highway Ports of Entry (POE) and between the POEs along the more remote areas on the Washington/British Columbia border, including the maritime borders. Multi-agency investigations show that DTOs continue to exploit remote areas along the Washington border, often throwing duffel bags or hockey bags containing drugs directly across the border. DTOs and TCOs in the eastern region of the state take advantage of the remote areas of the border, the lack of cross-border detection equipment such as radars, and the lack of critical infrastructure such as cell towers to increase the use of these rural routes.

Cocaine and methamphetamine en route to Canada are often concealed in legitimate cargo onboard commercial trucks, in cars and trucks with concealed compartments, and in commercial and private trailers. Helicopters, airplanes, and boats are used to smuggle drug loads into and out of Canada. Drones are a possible emerging threat as is seen in the U.S. Southwest border region, but as of yet have not been confirmed.

While cocaine and marijuana seizures along the northern border in the PacNW States of Washington and Idaho declined in 2014 compared to previous years, as of April 2014 there were four northbound multi-pound methamphetamine seizures, per multi-agency reporting. In 2013, there was only one reported northbound meth seizure and three in 2012. Other drugs seizures at the PacNW border decreased, but there was a demonstrated increase in the quantity and frequency of methamphetamine loads being smuggled into BC, Canada in 2014.

Geography

Washington's topography and location render it susceptible to drug smuggling and production. The Washington section of the U.S.-Canada border is approximately 430 miles in length, with 13 official ports of entry. A significant portion of the international border is located in secluded, dense forest. Remote expanses of public land are susceptible to many types of drug-related criminal activities, particularly to large-scale cannabis cultivation. Public lands that are adjacent to the U.S.-Canada border also serve as routes for drug and currency smuggling. Most of the area on both sides of the U.S.-Canada border is sparsely populated and encompassed by densely forested public lands where crossing the border can be accomplished without detection. Other threats to the United States' northern border include illegal alien entry, human trafficking, money laundering, firearms trafficking, maritime/air smuggling, and threats relating to terrorist activities. The 42-mile stretch of the far western edge of the Washington–Canada border, which encompasses the Blaine Sector, is the primary shipment point. This region contains the main I-5 corridor entry point between Washington and Canada, thus naturally generating the most seizures over other entry points.

Points of Entry Map



Source: Transportation Border Working Group

Threats

Despite steady declines in drug and currency seizures along the Washington-British Columbia border, there remain significant threats, particularly with Mexican National DTOs firmly

entrenched in Washington State and British Columbia. The Sinaloa Cartel, La Familia Michoacana, Knights Templar, and Beltran-Leyva Organization are the most present Mexican DTOs as reported by agencies working the U.S./Canada border. In addition, Outlaw Motorcycle Gangs, independent Caucasian groups, ethnic East Indians (Indo-Canadians), Asian Organized Crime (OC) groups, Chinese DTOs are a serious threat in the region.

Each of these groups specializes in one aspect or another of drug trafficking. Mexican DTOs consist of families and illegal immigrants, some of whom work in agriculture, that also transport large quantities of methamphetamine and cocaine into Canada. Especially seen in the eastern region of the state, they are able to assimilate with Hispanic communities and utilize criminal immigrants, local gangs, and criminal family groups. Asian groups, specifically Vietnamese, tend to control indoor marijuana grow operations; Chinese DTOs based in China and Canada are responsible for precursor chemical smuggling and methamphetamine/MDMA manufacturing. Indo-Canadian DTOs are principally involved in transporting smuggled goods.

The Interstate 5 (I-5) corridor is the main transportation route into the PacNW region and into BC, Canada. Interceptions of smuggled drugs occur at both the designated highway Ports of Entry (POE) and between the POEs along the more remote areas on the Washington/British Columbia border, including the maritime borders. Multi-agency investigations show that DTOs continue to exploit remote areas along the Washington border, often throwing duffel bags or hockey bags containing drugs directly across the border. These DTOs are also known to utilize old logging trails and hiking trails in the Vedder and Sumas Mountain ranges to transport drugs and money. Narcotics en route to Canada are often concealed in legitimate cargo onboard commercial trucks, in cars and trucks with concealed compartments, and in commercial and private trailers. They have also been found in backpacks and baggage of people walking across the border, or travelling by ferry. Helicopters, airplanes, and boats are used to smuggle drug loads into and out of Canada as well. Drones are a possible emerging threat as is seen in the U.S. Southwest border region, but as of now nothing has been documented.

Marijuana seizures have historically made up the majority of illicit narcotics seizures in Washington. During the height of marijuana seizures in 2004 and 2005, there was over 8,000 kilograms of marijuana seized both years. Seizures of marijuana have been on a sharp decline since 2005 with just 51 kilograms seized in 2014. The reasons for the dramatic decline are not completely understood; however, law enforcement agencies assess that the transplanting of indoor grow operations into Washington and other west coast states, and the establishment of medical marijuana cooperatives decreased the need to continue smuggling high levels of marijuana into the Pacific Northwest. Marijuana grown and produced in Canada is still believed to be smuggled into the PacNW, but in decreasing amounts, in a variety of methods as noted above. Intelligence on many of these methods is based on historical seizures and multi-agency joint investigations.

The El Paso Information Center's (EPIC) National Seizure System (NSS) data indicates that transportation groups continue to smuggle MDMA southbound across the British Columbia - Washington border. Seizures of MDMA in the region remained relatively stable until 2012 and 2013, after the peak years of 2008 and 2009. In the first five months of 2013 there were four major seizures of U.S.-bound MDMA totaling over 257 kilograms. Seizures continued into 2014. MDMA smuggling from British Columbia to Washington State will continue to be an ever-present threat, as Canada is the primary source of MDMA in North America. The precursors are smuggled from China into Canada, where it is processed. Trafficking of MDMA in tablet form remains the standard; however, recent investigations in the Northwest indicate that powdered MDMA is also being smuggled.

Cocaine continues to find its way across the U.S/Canada border, with seizures on the decline. There were just 101 kilograms of cocaine seized in 2014, which is a small amount compared to the 800 kilograms seized in 2008 and 880 kilograms in 2009. Cocaine seizures reached a five-year low in 2014. As with other illicit drugs being transported into Canada, reporting agencies do still cite Mexican DTOs as the most prominent importer of cocaine. It should also be noted that multi-hundred kilogram shipments are known to be shipped directly to Canada from areas outside the U.S. via air and maritime conveyances.

Cross-border Seizures at the U.S Canada border for 2014	
Methamphetamine	87.5 kg
MDMA/Ecstasy	48 kg
Marijuana	51 kg
Cocaine	101 kg
Cash	\$750,000 US

A consistent trend in currency exchange that has been seen in the last few years involving the Washington-Canada border is a double exchange, which is similar to the Black Market Peso Exchange. The Double Exchange decreases the need to smuggle illicit proceeds across the Canada border. In a Double Exchange, a money broker has contacts with both Canadian cocaine distributors and marijuana producers. The money broker would wire proceeds from the Canadian cocaine sales to Canadian marijuana or MDMA producers who then smuggle their marijuana or MDMA into the United States. Proceeds from the marijuana or MDMA sales in the United States are picked up by couriers across the country and delivered to cocaine sources in California. The cocaine is then smuggled across the US-Canada border to cocaine distributors in Canada, thus balancing the books, and the process is repeated. The Double Exchange essentially eliminates the need to smuggle currency across the US-Canada border. In recent years, according to the DEA Seattle FD, Vietnamese DTOs have been utilizing the double exchange method with MDMA

instead of marijuana. In these cases, MDMA is transported down to California and cocaine is smuggled back into Canada. Bulk cash seizures in 2013 totaled \$3.1 million, and the year before that less than half a million. The 2014 total of approximately \$750,000 demonstrates the fluctuation seen in bulk cash seizures year to year.

Transportation Methods

Bi-national, multi-agency intelligence believe that TCO/DTOs may still be using small helicopters, fixed wing aircraft, and float planes to traffic narcotics in and out of the U.S. in Eastern Washington, Idaho, and Western Montana. Also, they are utilizing old logging roads and hiking trails in the Vedder and Sumas Mountain ranges to transport drugs and money. Multi-agency investigations show that DTOs continue to exploit remote areas along the Washington border, often throwing duffel bags or hockey bags containing drugs directly across the border.



Source: Northwest HIDTA Border Task Force

Law enforcement agencies operating on or near the border have seen a significant decline in reports of suspicious aircraft activity along the U.S./Canada Border particularly in Eastern Washington and Northern Idaho. In an area roughly defined as being between Oroville, Washington and Eureka, Montana, there are substantially less reports of suspect aircraft than anywhere else along the Northern Border. In the past this area is preferred by air smugglers primarily because of terrain features that make electronic detection difficult (i.e., deep canyons in which aircraft can fly) and easy ground ingress/egress routes in this area. Reports of cross-border air/marine traffic in the Pacific Northwest have declined in 2012 according to U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP). Bi-national law enforcement agencies believe that air/marine

smuggling goes undetected and TCO/DTOs will likely continue, and potentially expand, their air/marine smuggling operations. Law enforcement officials surmise that many poly-drug DTOs use fishing boats, pleasure boats, ferries, cruise ships, and commercial maritime vessels, including barges, to smuggle drugs among Washington and Alaska maritime and coastal regions, and Idaho lakes and rivers, into Canada. Some Canadian TCO members travel to Mexico and other Latin American countries to arrange drug loads, which then often traverse through United States waters, including the Puget Sound and Strait of Juan de Fuca. The United States-Canada maritime border traverses the middle of the Strait.

There are several sophisticated human and narcotics smuggling organizations operating along the U.S./Canada border in Eastern Washington and Northern Idaho. These organizations utilize cellular/smart phones, two way radios, and night-vision equipment and counter surveillance tactics. The counter-surveillance by the criminal element is well documented. The criminal element entering through the area has the capability of effecting illegal entry without detection due to the vastness of the territory.



The U.S-Canada border near Sumas, WA and Abbotsford, BC Source: Ted S. Warren/Associated Press

Smugglers have a thorough knowledge of the area. They have an extensive network of wellestablished routes through the rugged mountain ranges, some routes are only accessible by foot, horse, or mule. Smugglers use "lay-up" spots and "pick-up" points to wait out law enforcement efforts. Smugglers' tactics include surveillance and counter-surveillance, for the presence of agents patrolling the avenues of ingress/egress from the border. Numerous small private airstrips are located on both sides of the International Border. Smugglers can use these airfields since they are not monitored or patrolled extensively.



US Border Patrol at the Simikameen River Source: Ted S. Warren/Associated Press

Human Trafficking TCOs continue to operate in the region at elevated levels despite apprehension of key members in these organizations. Canada and the United States remain desirable countries for illegal immigrants. Weapons trafficking seizures also continue to decrease as more law enforcement attention is focused on groups responsible for cross-border smuggling.

As a demonstration of the joint effort along the Northern Border to interrupt and dismantle drug trafficking offenders and organizations, a seizure was reported in January 2014 consisting of the apprehension of two foreign nationals, and seizure of \$373,918 in U.S. currency, 37 kilograms of cocaine, and one pair of Night Vision Goggles (Military Type NVG-7). The agencies involved credited the joint relationships along the border with bringing about new ways of looking at tackling aspects of the mission to identify familiarity blindness, spanning a two-year investigation.

Northern Border Counternarcotics Strategy

On January 4, 2011, the President signed H.R. 4748 (P.L. 111-356) amending the National Drug Control Policy Reauthorization Act of 2006 to require a Northern Border Counternarcotics Strategy. The act requires the Office of National Drug Control Policy (ONDCP) to consult with the heads of the relevant National Drug Control Program agencies to develop a Northern Border Counternarcotics Strategy by July 3, 2011. The Strategy sets forth the Administration's plans to substantially reduce the flow of illicit drugs and drug proceeds into and out of Canada, with a focus on small communities along the border and enhanced relationships and cooperation with

tribal governments. The Strategy addresses joint efforts in the following areas: intelligence collection and information sharing; interdiction at and between ports of entry as well as in the air and maritime domains; investigations and prosecutions; disrupting and dismantling drug trafficking organizations, with a focus on MDMA and Canadian-produced marijuana; and enhancing cooperation with Canada.

The key areas of cooperation are: Addressing Threats Early; Trade Facilitation, Economic Growth, and Jobs; Integrated Cross-border Law Enforcement; and Critical Infrastructure and Cybersecurity. Through integrated cross-border law enforcement, the United States and Canada will build upon existing relationships, programs, and policies; seek further opportunities to pursue national security by disrupting transnational criminal organizations; and improve our information sharing, allowing us to use our resources more efficiently and effectively to curb the flow of illegal narcotics and money across the Northern border.

This document, the 2012 National Northern Border Counternarcotics Strategy (Strategy), updated in 2014, articulates the U.S. framework for the ongoing efforts to reduce the threats on both sides of the border and is guided by the following strategic goal and five strategic objectives:

Strategic Objectives

- 1. Enhance intelligence and information sharing capabilities and processes associated with the Northern border;
- 2. Interdict illicit drugs and illicit drug proceeds at and between the ports of entry along the Northern border;
- 3. Interdict illicit drugs and illicit drug proceeds in the air and maritime domains along the Northern border;
- 4. Enhance counterdrug efforts and cooperation with tribal governments along the Northern border;
- 5. Disrupt and dismantle transnational criminal organizations operating along the Northern border.

Joint Enforcement Coordination

Project North Star

Project North Star was first proposed in the 1989 National Drug Control Strategy. It was formally launched in Buffalo, New York in July 1990. The ninth annual U.S.-Canada Cross-Border Crime Forum (CBCF) took place in Ashville, NC, in the fall of 2006. Both countries signed an agreement at that time that allows for the electronic exchange of ballistics information between the two countries. The participants at previous CBCFs also reiterated the importance of

the role of Project North Star. Since becoming formally aligned with the CBCF in early 2001, the role of Project North Star as a mechanism for joint law enforcement coordination has been significantly enhanced. Project North Star continues to be a multi-agency forum for cooperative coordination of border-related law enforcement efforts along the United States and Canada border. Through this forum, law enforcement agencies are able to identify, discuss, and prioritize joint challenges and obstacles for law enforcement at the border; bring these obstacles to policy makers at the U.S.-Canada CBCF for resolution; and works to increase and establish new, joint representation of the American and Canadian law enforcement community at the binational, regional, and local levels.

Northern Border Intelligence Projects (NBIP)

The Northern Border Intelligence Projects (NBIP) Team is a law enforcement agency partnership that serves as a regional cross-border analytical and intelligence group. The mission of the NBIP is to collect, analyze, and disseminate strategic, operational, and tactical intelligence pertaining to cross-border criminal activity between Canada and the United States. NBIP tasking is directed by the Pacific JMT.

At the Pacific NBIP, analysts from a number of Canadian and US agencies were co-located until 2013, when the staffing was reduced due to budgets and agency priorities. The main contributing agencies are currently:

Canada Border Services Agency (CBSA)

Immigration and Customs Enforcement, Homeland Security Investigations (ICE/HSI)

Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP)

U.S. Coast Guard (USCG)

U.S. Customs and Border Protection, Office of Field Operations (CBP/OFO)

U.S. Customs and Border Protection, US Border Patrol (CBP/USBP)

Additional participating agencies include the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) and the Northwest High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area (NW HIDTA). The Northern Border Intelligence Projects (NBIP) teams can be comprised of analysts and investigators from both countries serving in a bilateral partnership to identify, investigate, and provide intelligence to interdict cross-border criminal activity. Exact composition of the NBIP depends upon their current projects.

Shiprider Agreement

The Shiprider agreement provides a new tool for law enforcement cooperation by providing trans-border law enforcement authority to Canadian and U.S. maritime law enforcement operating along and across the maritime border. It removes the maritime boundary and allows

seamless enforcement while facilitating cross-border surveillance and interdiction. During the trial operation in 2007, the U.S. Coast Guard and Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) officers worked together on maritime law enforcement issues in the Strait of Juan de Fuca and other inland marine waters. On June 17, 2013, the RCMP and U.S. Coast Guard formalized their Shiprider procedure, which is now formally known as Integrated Cross-border Maritime Law Enforcement Operations (ICMLEO).

The Straits of Juan de Fuca represent the longest continuous U.S. international maritime border. Many parts of this region are remote, while others have an extremely high density of small vessel traffic. Smuggling of marijuana, MDMA, and cocaine occurs in this region, and guns and money flow across the border in exchange for drugs. Smugglers in the Northwest are highly resourceful and have recently taken to smuggling by helicopter in remote land regions and using sophisticated hidden compartments in land vehicles. As the United States works to mitigate these land-based smuggling routes, maritime smuggling may rise.

Operation Shiprider, an ICMLEO program that teamed U.S. and Canadian law enforcement officers to man law enforcement vessels and enforce each nation's laws, has proven to be a successful method to address threats along the international maritime border. As part of this program, the Coast Guard received a request from the Government of Canada to participate in cross-border cooperative Shiprider operations in support of the 2010 Vancouver Olympics.



U.S.-Canada border at Blaine, - WA beginning of the maritime border Source: CLUI photo by Steve Rowell

Northwest HIDTA Border Task Force

The Northwest HIDTA Border Task Force (NWHBTF) is an interdiction and investigative initiative with a mission to dismantle and disrupt targeted cross-border drug trafficking

organizations through the seizure of drugs, assets, and prosecutions. The NWHBTF is a joint international, federal, state, and local effort with three distinct components, including joint U.S.-Canada staffed Northern Border Intelligence Projects (NBIP), Border Enforcement Security Taskforce (BEST North and BEST South), and a prosecution unit. BEST North investigates cases that involve smuggling through ports of entry. BEST South investigates cases that involve smuggling in between the ports of entry, including land, air and marine smuggling.

Spokane County HIDTA Task Force

The Spokane County HIDTA Task Force combines DEA Spokane and the Spokane County Regional Drug Task Force and works international and domestic drug investigations. The Task Force works closely with tribal law enforcement, particularly the Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation on investigations and during marijuana eradication efforts. The Spokane County HIDTA Task force has responsibility for northern Idaho and works closely with federal, state, local, and tribal law enforcement agencies.

Investigative Support Center

The Northwest HIDTA Investigative Support Center (ISC) provides HIDTA-wide intelligence and information sharing to the Northwest HIDTA initiatives. The primary task of the ISC is to provide analytical support and intelligence information services to the HIDTA task forces and participating agencies in the HIDTA region and the U.S.-Canada border area. The Northwest HIDTA ISC also coordinates activities and shares intelligence with the Pacific NBIP, which is an intelligence unit that is part of the Northwest HIDTA Border Task Force in Blaine, Washington. The Northwest HIDTA ISC funds participation in HIDTA task forces by providing assistance to state and local law enforcement agencies, strengthening international partnerships, and fostering involvement in Organized Crime Drug Enforcement Task Force (OCDETF) and IBET programs. Because these programs deal broadly with enhancing cooperation, information sharing, and coordination, the Northwest HIDTA ISC is pivotal in serving as a platform to maximize efficiencies.

Domestic Highway Enforcement Initiative (DHE)

The Pacific Northwest Domestic Highway Enforcement (DHE) program is an effective tool aimed towards the disruption of drug-transportation and the distribution elements of drug trafficking organizations. This initiative outlines a vast operational area, which will encompass the major highway corridors used for the transportation of drugs not only in Washington State but also in the Pacific Northwest region of the U.S. to include Idaho, Montana, and Oregon. The HIDTA Director, as the Regional Coordinator, established a Regional Coordination Committee (RCC) to oversee the DHE strategy in the area. The DHE program routinely conducts an I-5 corridor emphasis operation. In addition, the Northwest HIDTA has a dedicated HIDTA analyst that collects all subject, event, and seizure data gleaned from the enforcement efforts of this initiative, the results of which are shared with law enforcement in the region.

Other Programs

In addition to enforcement and intelligence initiatives, the following describe meetings in which NW HIDTA participates on a regular basis that deal with Northern Border issues. The Washington State Fusion Center (WSFC) plays an important role in disseminating bulletins concerning potential threats to Washington State and Canada. The WSFC, in conjunction with the Department of Homeland Security and the Federal Bureau of Investigation increased threat awareness and information sharing throughout the State in relation to the 2010 Winter Olympic and Paralympic Games (2010 Olympics) held in Vancouver, British Columbia.

Outlook

Northwest HIDTA participates fully in northern border programs and will continue to foster cooperation among federal, state, local, tribal and international law enforcement agencies along the Washington-British Columbia border. The Northwest HIDTA plays an important role in facilitating intelligence-sharing and enforcement cooperation through funding and analytical support.