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For Immediate Release

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Yesterday the Honorable Judge Bruce Watson sentenced Jeremy Bensen to serve 270 days in jail for cultivation of marijuana and providing false information to commit a fraud.

In December, 2007 an investigation by agents with the Humboldt County Drug Task Force utilized a search warrant to obtain utility records for Mr. Bensen's two residences.

The records showed that at 2559 Baldwin Street in Arcata the usage from January 2006-October 2007 ranged from 3,800 kilowatt hours to 6,000 kilowatt hours. The records for 3178 Pigeon Point, Eureka showed the kilowatt usage ranged from 5,700 to 7,800 for the period of time from April 2007 to October 2007. Based upon information reflecting an abnormally high use of power, the agents then obtained warrants for those residences and served them on December 18, 2007. The agents found 89 plants at 2559 Baldwin Street along with processed marijuana, a scale, packaging and \$1,640. In the Pigeon Point home agents found 228 plants, processed marijuana, and \$3600. Agents also located bank records that ultimately showed \$101,590 was deposited in cash in 2006 and \$157,170 in cash in 2007. Specifically a number of the deposits were structured to avoid reporting the large cash deposits.

During the investigation Humboldt County Sheriff's Deputies learned the defendant had property in the Pilot Rock area of Southern Humboldt and served a search warrant on the defendant's 40 acre parcel. There they found 100 marijuana plants growing. In addition to the jail term the defendant forfeited the money seized during the service of the search warrant.

The cases were prosecuted by Deputy District Attorney Maggie Fleming. Mr. Bensen was represented by Mark Harris.

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