

Yesterday, May 14, 2009, Gang Investigators from the Western North Carolina Gang Task Force and the Henderson County Sheriffs Warrant Squad conducted a search in the area of Mills Gap Road in north Henderson County for a fugitive and gang member featured on "Mountains Most Wanted". Adam (AJ) Lopez, also known as "Yogi", was believed to be in the company his half brother, Jose Lopez. Both men are members of Sur 13, a street gang that has been resurgent in the area. Jose Lopez was wanted on warrants in Buncombe County. The suspects appeared to have fled prior to the officers' arrival to the area. . Gang Task Force members from Henderson County remained in the north county area following tips and conducting surveillance operations until they located both suspects in a vehicle. A traffic stop on the vehicle resulted in the arrest of both suspects. Adam Lopez was transported to the Henderson County Detention Center where he was placed under a 600,000 dollar bond. His charges include a Fugitive Warrant from the state of Indiana as well as local charges of Possession of Stolen Property, Breaking and Entering and Larceny. Jose Lopez was turned over to Buncombe County deputies for unspecified charges from their county.

The Western Carolina Gang Task Force is an alliance of specially trained officers from the Asheville Police Department, and the Sheriffs' Office of Henderson and Buncombe Counties. It has been operational for about four months and has been instrumental in gathering intelligence, consolidating information, and allowing these agencies to bring a more effective approach to the gang problem.

Sheriff Rick Davis sees the task force as "an effective force multiplier that helps agencies make the most of their resources through the synergy found in multi agency efforts directed toward a specific problem area. We enjoy very positive working relationships with all of our neighboring jurisdictions. This task force is just one more example."



Adam Lopez