

Drug forfeiture money rolls into El Dorado County

El Dorado County will receive more than a quarter million dollars in forfeited narcotics proceeds.

Cash, bank accounts, and a house on 10 acres in Placerville were forfeited from two El Dorado County residents. Robert Edward Mulready, 50, of Placerville, and Duane Patrick Petersen, 40, of Shingle Springs, were charged in U.S. District Court with conspiring to cultivate marijuana and distribute it out-of-state. Last year, Mulready was sentenced to 3½ years in prison, and Petersen was sentenced to 22 months in prison.

The U.S. Attorney's Office has given \$230,600 to the El Dorado County Sheriff's Department and \$32,900 to the El Dorado County District Attorney's Office. Both agencies assisted in the investigation of the interstate marijuana-trafficking ring that resulted in a federal prosecution.

"The arrest, prosecution and asset forfeiture of proceeds from this criminal operation should send a strong message that federal and local law enforcement will not allow such operations to continue," Sheriff John D'Agostini said in a statement.

The Department of Justice's equitable sharing program is designed to enhance cooperation among federal, state, and local law enforcement agencies through the sharing of proceeds resulting from federal forfeitures. The amount shared with state and local law enforcement agencies is based on the degree of the agencies' direct participation in the case.

This case was the product of an investigation by the Drug Enforcement Administration and the Western El Dorado County Narcotics Enforcement Team.

– *Lake Tahoe News staff report*