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ARKANSAS AGRICULTURE DEPARTMENT

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1 NATURAL RESOURCES DRIVE, LITTLE ROCK, AR 72205 | (501) 225-1598 | AAD.ARKANSAS.GOV



WES WARD
SECRETARY OF AGRICULTURE

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CONTACT: Adriane Barnes, (501) 516-6255, Adriane.barnes@agriculture.arkansas.gov

Agriculture Law Enforcement Officers Stop Illegal Dumping

STATEWIDE, ARK. – A restored dumping site in Columbia County is the most recent success story of Arkansas Agriculture Department (AAD) law enforcement officials, who worked with the local Sheriff's Office to remove dumped debris and track down the individuals responsible. In 2017, 43 illegal dump sites were fully removed from property across the state. Arkansas residents can report illegal dumping to AAD Law Enforcement Officers by completing an online complaint form, [here](#).

"A dump site is a problem that no landowner should have to deal with. The discarding of trash on another person's property is illegal and there is no excuse for it," says Law Enforcement Officer Chris Ludwig. "We work with local officials and community partners to ensure that when an illegal dump is discovered, landowners understand their options for removing debris and restoring the area. This isn't only about prosecuting those that commit these crimes, it's also about protecting Arkansas's natural resources."

AAD Investigators work with state, local and county law enforcement officers to investigate crimes and prosecute when necessary. The Columbia County dump was removed after Ludwig and Columbia County Ranger Scott Morehead worked with local officials and private landowners to establish consistent surveillance of the area. Violators were identified after capturing footage through surveillance from multiple devices, and by connecting individuals to the site by items dumped there. In this case, the individuals responsible for dumping items were given the option to clean up the site or face prosecution. The site was cleaned up, as pictures (attached) show.

AAD Law Enforcement officers are fully certified, but specialize in the investigation of agricultural crimes. Common cases include wildfire arson, timber theft, livestock theft, agricultural and forestry equipment theft or vandalism, illegal dumping, and enforcement of an array of AAD regulations. More than \$167,000 in restitution was returned to Arkansas landowners involved with cases like these last year. Learn more about AAD Law Enforcement and the investigation of agricultural crimes, [here](#).

"This is one of many success stories that demonstrate why it is so important to have dedicated law enforcement officers with expertise in responding to crimes that affect our state's largest industry," says Arkansas Agriculture Secretary Wes Ward. "The needs of Arkansas landowners and agricultural producers are our top priority. Our three fully certified officers and 12 part-time officers make sure all corners of the state are covered in order to keep our industry strong and successful into the future."

The Arkansas Agriculture Department is dedicated to the development and implementation of policies and programs for Arkansas agriculture and forestry to keep its farmers and ranchers competitive in national and international markets while ensuring safe food, fiber, and forest products for the citizens of the state and nation. Visit www.agriculture.arkansas.gov

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