

Joint DENR-PNP-PA team confiscates P1.3M forest contraband in Nueva Ecija

The anti-illegal logging campaign embarked by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), the Philippine National Police and the Philippine Army in Nueva Ecija last October has resulted in the confiscation of about 20,000 board feet of forest contraband worth at least P1.3 million.

In its report to DENR Secretary Ramon J. P. Paje, DENR Regional Executive Director for Central Luzon Maximo Dichoso said the confiscations included some 8,024 board feet of premium hardwood dipterocarp valued at half-million pesos recovered from the backyard of a furniture maker and 329 sacks of charcoal.

Dichoso said the campaign dubbed “CamPlan N.E. 10.12” was carried out by operatives from the DENR’s Talavera and Cabanatuan offices, local police and the 702nd Brigade and 56th Infantry Battalion of the Philippine Army to neutralize within the month the illegal logging syndicates operating in Gen. Tinio town, a known “hotbed” of illegal logging in Nueva Ecija.

Seized from the backyard of furniture maker Apid Maducdoc of Sitio Batog of Brgy. Rio Chico were contraband wood of Yakal, Bagtikan, and Apitong, which informants said were reportedly cut from the mountains of Sierra Madre in Dona Remedios Trinidad in Bulacan, and floated down the river of Sumacbao in Gen. Tinio.

According to Dichoso, his office is set to file criminal charges against Maducdoc for violations of Section 68 of Presidential Decree 705 or the Forestry Reform Code of the Philippines, as

amended by Executive Order No. 277 of 1987. Maducdoc has since remained at large.

Dichoso also ordered a probe on the involvement of certain local officials who abetted illegal logging operations in Gen. Tinio.

Resolution No. 2011-006 of the Anti-Illegal Logging Task Force (AILTF) states that all forest products coming from natural and residual forests after February 28, 2012 shall be considered as property of the state.

The DENR has identified the towns of Bongabon, General Tinio, and Gabaldon as illegal logging “hotspots” in Nueva Ecija.

Last year’s forest protection campaign in Central Luzon yielded 212,517 board feet of assorted forest products and conveyances estimated to worth at least P7 million.