

## **K9 on Patrol at the Imperial Sand Dunes!**

Almost 80,000 visitors enjoyed bluebird skies over the Halloween Weekend at the Imperial Sand Dunes Recreation Area. Making sure those visitors stayed safe were an elite group of individuals and their four-footed partners, the BLM Police Canine Teams.

Canine teams from BLM offices in Lake Havasu, AZ; Palm Springs, CA; Boise, ID; and Sante Fe, NM enhanced El Centro's K9 team, deploying 62 times over the four day event. The dogs saw the most action alerting their handlers to illegal drugs, helping law enforcement officers find marijuana, cocaine, methamphetamine and heroin. Follow-up investigations nosed out firearms, illegal weapons and a stolen motorcycle. This activity protects visitors from illegal drugs and weapons. El Centro's Acting Chief Ranger David Spain, who also acts as the Bureau's Canine Officer, remarks "Deploying K9 Teams in this fashion has a positive impact on visitor safety, and also serves to prevent crime. The dogs help officers keep drugs out of the dunes."