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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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**\*NEWS RELEASE\***

**TWO DESERT HOT SPRINGS GANG MEMBERS GUILTY OF MURDER**

INDIO, CA. – Today, a Riverside County jury has found two Desert Hot Springs gang members guilty of murder and found true special allegations that the men committed the crimes on behalf of a criminal street gang.

“These defendants were a direct threat to Desert Hot Springs,” said District Attorney Rod Pacheco. “This conviction is a vital step forward in the fight to win back Desert Hot Springs.”

Anthony Albert Paez (DOB: 09/19/89) and Edgar Antonio Flores (DOB: 07/04/92) engaged in a shootout with police on May 30, 2009, that left their accomplice, Alexis Melendrez, dead. Both men were found guilty of murder as they provoked and engaged police in a shooting which resulted in Melendrez’s death.

The jury found Paez guilty of a total of 15 counts which included four counts of attempted murder of a police officer. They found Flores guilty of three counts, including murder.

The case, INF062219, was by prosecuted by Deputy District Anthony Orlando.

“Today, the community spoke and justice was achieved. The jury did an excellent job in applying the facts to a very complicated murder theory and came to the appropriate decision,” Orlando said. “They, along with the number of witnesses who testified, should be commended for bringing order to what was chaos on those two days in May of 2008 and for ultimately bringing these two gang bangers to justice.”

Paez is scheduled to be sentenced at 9 AM on April 9, 2010 at the Larson Justice Center in Dept. 3S. Flores is scheduled to be sentenced at 9 AM on April 12, 2010 in Dept. 3S of the Larson Justice Center. Paez faces 102 years to life in prison while Flores faces up to 40 years to life in prison.

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