Coast Guard Interdicts Suspected Drug Smuggling Vessel, Seizes $1.3M in Narcotics



A suspected drug smuggling vessel tied to the pier following an interdiction by the crew of the Coast Guard Cutter Richard Etheridge 8 miles off Miami, Florida, Feb. 21, 2026. The Etheridge’s crew seized approximately 17 pounds of marijuana and 174 pounds of cocaine found aboard the vessel. (U.S. Coast Guard photo)

From Coast Guard Southeast District, Feb. 27, 2026

MIAMI – Coast Guard Cutter Richard Etheridge's crew interdicted a suspected smuggling vessel, Saturday, at approximately 2:15 p.m., about 8 miles offshore of Miami.

During the boarding, the joint law enforcement crew found approximately 17 pounds of marijuana and 174 pounds of cocaine, later confirmed through laboratory testing, worth an estimated $1.3 million.

The two suspected smugglers were taken into custody for further investigation by Homeland Security Investigations.

"Our crew is committed to keeping drugs off the streets and protecting America's borders," said Lt. Zane Carter, commanding officer, Coast Guard Cutter Richard Etheridge. "I could not be prouder of my crew's professionalism and their seamless integration with our partner agencies."

Agencies involved in the interdiction:

- Coast Guard Southeast District
- Coast Guard Sector Miami
- Coast Guard Cutter Richard Etheridge
- Coast Guard Investigative Service
- Homeland Security Investigations
- Customs and Border Protection Office of Field Operations K9 unit

- Customs and Border Protection Air and Marine Operations