OPERATION FORSYTH GROVE

2ND BATTALION, 5TH MARINES

1st Marine Division | Republic of Vietnam | 1–3 July 1969

FIELD	DETAIL
Operation Name	Operation Forsyth Grove (often misspelled "Forsythe Grove")
Dates of Operation	010800H – 032400H July 1969 (5th Marines Command Chronology). Units moved into blocking positions during the night of 30 June – 1 July.
Mission Purpose / Objective	5th Marines cordon and search operation. A two-kilometer-square objective in the northern Arizona Territory was sealed off at night by three battalions, then searched to deny the local Viet Cong the use of a natural sanctuary.
Locations / Cities	Northern Arizona Territory, between the Song Vu Gia and the Song Thu Bon; Duc Duc / Dai Loc districts; Quang Nam Province
TAOR	Northern Arizona Territory; Quang Nam Province
UTM Coordinates	2/5 area of operations bounded by lines through AT 99xx, AT 96xx and AT 933xx (5th Marines operation order; partly illegible in the scan). Company F, 2/5 platoon contact, 1 Jul: AT 891554. Company E, 2/5 search, 2 Jul: AT 897526. (5th Marines and 2/5 journals.).
USMC Units Involved	5th Marines (Col William J. Zaro): 1st Battalion, 5th Marines (LtCol William E. Riley Jr.) blocking from the south; 2nd Battalion, 5th Marines (LtCol James H. Higgins) blocking from the east; 1st Battalion, 7th Marines (LtCol John A. Dowd, reinforced by a company of 3/7), fording the Song Vu Gia from the north to close the cordon; artillery of the 11th Marines. The legible 2/5 journal entries name Companies E, F and G.
2/5 Companies Participated	Company E; Company F; Company G. The legible 2/5 journal entries name Companies E, F and G.
Mission Results	During the night Riley's 1/5 moved into blocking positions on the south, coming up from the southern Arizona. 2/5 made a covert crossing of the Song Thu Bon and took blocking positions on the east. Before sunrise on 1 July, 1/7 forded the Song Vu Gia and closed the trap. The search met only token resistance. On 1 July a Company F, 2/5 platoon moving into position at AT 891554 took fire from two VC/NVA, assaulted, and killed two. Detainees and hidden food were found during the sweeps. The 5th Marines reported that the local Viet Cong were again "denied the use and exploitation of a natural sanctuary." Afterward 1/5 stayed in the area, 2/5 returned to Phu Loc (6) and resumed security of Liberty Bridge and Liberty Road (North), and 1/7 recrossed the Song Vu Gia.
USMC KIA	Not stated for the operation (2/5 lost 5 KIA in all of July 1969). Breakdown by 2/5 company: not recorded.
USMC Wounded	Not stated for the operation. Breakdown by 2/5 company: not recorded.
Enemy KIA	Not stated for the whole operation; at least 2 by Company F, 2/5 on 1 July
Enemy Wounded	Unknown; detainees taken

NOTES & SOURCE REFERENCES

UPDATED 16 SEPTEMBER 2026 FROM PRIMARY SOURCES. 2/5 PARTICIPATION CONFIRMED; H COMPANY'S ROLE NOT IDENTIFIED. This is a new file. Smith's official history names 1/5, 2/5 and 1/7 in Forsyth Grove. The 5th Marines Command Chronology for July 1969 dates it from 0800 on 1 July to 2400 on 3 July. The 2/5 Command Chronology for July 1969 contains an S-3 "FORSYTH GROVE Journal" for 1–3 July, but the scan is badly degraded. Its legible entries name Companies E, F and G, and no entry clearly names Company H, which may have stayed on Liberty Bridge or Road security. The record does not say whether Company H, H&S Company took part. Company H’s role is not recorded.

RELATED CORRECTION (DURHAM PEAK). The 2/5 July 1969 chronology records Company H, 2/5 under the operational control of 2nd Battalion, 1st Marines from 241200H to 312400H July 1969, three weeks after Forsyth Grove. 2/1's own July 1969 chronology separates its Company H from "Company H, 5th Marines." It confirms that the Hill 845 / Nui Mat Rang fights of 25–26 July were 2/1's Company H. H/2/5 was searching nearby at the same time: rice caches at BT 023483 and BT 033480 (26 Jul), enemy base camps at BT 023458 (27 Jul), and artillery on 15–20 enemy at BT 033481 (30 Jul). The Durham Peak file has been updated.

Primary sources: 5th Marines Command Chronology, July 1969 (Texas Tech University Vietnam Archive item 1201047014); 2/5 Command Chronology, July 1969, including the Forsyth Grove S-3 journal (item 1201048117); 2/1 Command Chronology, July 1969 (item 1201021013); Charles R. Smith, U.S. Marines in Vietnam: High Mobility and Standdown, 1969 (HQMC, 1988), p. 193. Originals: National Archives, RG 127 (National Archives II, College Park MD 20740; Marine Corps History Division, Quantico VA 22134).