

**BUTTE COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE  
MEDIA RELEASE**

**JERRY W. SMITH  
SHERIFF-CORONER**



**DATE:** December 22, 2011  
**RELEASED BY:** Sgt. Jason Hail/Felony Investigations Unit  
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On September 27, 2011, Butte County Sheriff's Deputy Morgan Turner met with Brooks Taylor at the Sheriff's Office in Oroville, CA. Mr. Taylor turned over a partial skull to Deputy Turner that Mr. Taylor had found in the forest near Browns Ravine Rd, east of Inskip in northeastern Butte County. Deputy Turner took possession of the skull and took a statement from Mr. Taylor. Deputy Turner then notified the Butte County Sheriff's Felony Investigations Unit and an investigation began.

Detective Jason Miller met with members of the Chico State Anthropology Department and asked for their assistance with confirming the skull was human and how long the skull had been exposed. Professors P. Willey, Eric Bartelink, and Colleen Milligan were each involved with assisting the Sheriff's Office in learning as much as possible about the skull.

Detective Miller met with Chico State Professor P. Willey and Mr. Taylor in early October and walked to the area where the skull was found. They located a partially torn sweater and a shoe.

Detective Miller learned soon after that the skull was, in fact, human and began researching missing person reports. Detective Miller discovered that in October, 2006, Wilma Lorraine Bounds (age 81) was visiting her brother in Paradise, CA. Ms. Bounds had left her brother's residence and was last seen heading back to her home in Doyle, CA. Ms. Bounds was never seen again, and it was believed that she may have taken back roads to return home because Ms. Bounds did not like driving on freeways and was somewhat adventurous.

In July, 2007, an employee for the U.S. Forest Service reported to the Butte County Sheriff's Office that a vehicle had been located at the end of Browns Ravine Rd, east of Inskip in Butte County. The license plate was a match to Ms. Bounds' vehicle, but she was nowhere to be found. Butte County Search and Rescue teams were sent out to search the area but did not locate any sign of Ms. Bounds. The vehicle was towed and processed, but no criminal evidence or sign of foul play was found.

After noting an evident connection between the location where the skull was found and Ms. Bounds' vehicle, Det. Miller contacted family members for information about Ms. Bounds' medical history. In the skull found by Mr. Taylor, two non-serialized surgical screws were located. Det. Miller obtained medical records relating to Ms. Bounds that further indicated the skull could be part of her remains.

Det. Miller requested assistance from Dr. William Whitlach, a local neurosurgeon, and Joe Rosendahl, a sales representative from Stryker (the manufacturer of the surgical screws). After meeting with Dr. Whitlach, Mr. Rosendahl, and the Chico State Anthropology professors, it was determined that the skull was most likely that of Missing Person, Wilma Bounds. Professor Colleen Milligan used an overlay program to match the skull remains to an MRI done on Ms. Bounds. Professor Milligan determined that the skull shape and surgical screws was an exact match.

The Butte County Sheriff's Office would like to thank all those involved for their assistance in identifying the remains. If anyone has specific information regarding this case, please contact Det. Jason Miller at 530-538-7322.