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PRESS RELEASE

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Man Charged in Running Down and Killing Moped Driver

A Chico man was charged today in Butte County Superior Court for driving his truck while intoxicated over a moped and killing its driver last weekend. He was also accused of fleeing the scene by driving away with the moped wedged under his truck for nearly two miles.

Chase Jacobsen, 24, of Chico, was charged with gross vehicular manslaughter while intoxicated and fleeing the scene of a collision.

Butte County District Attorney Mike Ramsey said the charges arose from a collision on Sunday, March 6, 2022, at approximately 12:30 a.m. near the Mud Creek Bridge on The Esplanade north of Chico. According to a witness, Terry Nilsen, 22, of Chico, was driving his street-legal moped south on the bridge about 35-40 mph when Jacobsen, also driving south in his Ford F150 truck, drove into the rear of the moped at about 55 mph. Ramsey said the speed limit in the area was 40 mph.

Nilsen was thrown from the moped and landed some 200 feet south of the impact area. Ramsey said the witness noted that Jacobsen did not stop and in fact increased his speed down the Esplanade with Nilsen's flaming moped wedged under the truck, spreading sparks in the area. Nilsen was taken by emergency personnel to Enloe Hospital where he died later that morning from major injuries.

Ramsey said the Chico Police Major Accident Investigation Team (MAIT) later traced the path of Jacobsen's truck on a circuitous route through a nearby residential neighborhood and determined Jacobsen drove approximately 1.7 miles with the moped still stuck under his truck. Investigators also said evidence on the road suggested that he stopped several times to try and remove the moped from underneath his truck. The MAIT team also sought and collected surveillance in the neighborhood showing the truck driving with flames and sparks coming from underneath the truck. The moped was found in the roadway in the 400 block of Middle Creek Drive.

Ramsey said Jacobsen's truck was found later that morning near his apartment in the 100 block of W. Lassen Avenue some two miles away from the final resting place of the moped. Officers contacted Jacobsen in his apartment and arrested him without resistance.

Jacobsen appeared in court this afternoon on his charges. Ramsey said the case was continued one week to March 16, 2022 at 8:30 a.m. for further arraignment and possible entry of plea. Jacobsen is being held without bail in the Butte County Jail due to public safety concerns. On the current charges, Jacobsen faces up to 15 years in prison.