



BUTTE COUNTY DISTRICT ATTORNEY



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PRESS RELEASE

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CHICO MAN FACES 14 YEARS IN PRISON FOR DANGEROUS CHASE

Butte County District Attorney Mike Ramsey announced a Chico man plead guilty today for a dangerous high-speed 19-mile chase that happened in September of 2019.

Daniel Thomas Hensley, 27, plead guilty in Butte County Superior Court this morning to two separate charges of Recklessly Evading the Police, two charges of Assault with a Deadly Weapon, Vehicle Theft, felony Resisting a Police Officer, and injuring a police K9.

Ramsey said the chase started when a pair of Butte County Sheriff's deputies observed Mr. Hensley in a neighborhood in Chico, and knew he had a warrant for his arrest. When the deputies tried to contact Hensley, he took off in a truck. He fled from police at high speed, driving recklessly and winding through the streets of Chico up towards the Centerville area. At that time, the deputies lost sight of him. However deputies found the truck abandoned in the area and began to search for him.

As that was happening, a 911 call reported Hensley had just stolen another truck from a resident's driveway and was driving away. Deputies, now joined by a CHP helicopter, responded to that area. A deputy found the truck and began to pursue it, assisted by other deputies. At one point Hensley slowed down, and then abruptly accelerated the stolen truck toward the deputy, who had to take evasive action to avoid being hit.

Hensley continued to flee at high speeds, now driving recklessly back down towards Chico. On Skyway near Bruce Road, Chico Police officers set up spike strips to try to stop Hensley as he sped towards Chico. As he approached the road block, Hensley drove onto a bike path, nearly hitting two cyclists who had to throw down their bikes and jump out of the way.

Hensley continued back towards the area where the chase initially began, eventually abandoning the stolen truck and running into a residential backyard. Deputies, at this point joined by Chico PD, CHP, and wardens from the Department of Fish and Game, surrounded the house and tried to convince Hensley to surrender. Hensley refused to give up, and was eventually taken into custody after fighting with officers. During the struggle, Sheriff's K9 "Chico" was deployed and managed to hold on to Hensley despite Hensley repeatedly punching "Chico" in the head. Fortunately, "Chico" was not seriously hurt. Hensley was treated for dog bites at a local hospital.

Ramsey said Hensley will be sentenced on August 19, 2020 to 14 years in state prison. Ramsey explained as a result of what Hensley plead to, he now has "Three Strikes" on his record so any future serious crimes could result in Hensley serving a life sentence.