



Sandra A. Groven
District Attorney

COUNTY OF SIERRA

PRESS RELEASE

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Mike Fisher
Sheriff-Coroner

On March 7, 2023, John Thomas Conway appeared in the Sierra Superior Court to enter a plea to charges filed by the Sierra County District's Attorney Office in conjunction with the California Attorney General's Office, regarding a mass shooting that occurred on July 3, 2020.

On July 3, 2020, Mr. Conway traveled to a remote area of Sierra County, known as Poker Flat. While in a stolen side-by-side, Mr. Conway, without provocation, shot three individuals. Two were severely wounded and one victim was killed. A juvenile fled into the wilderness to escape the attack and, after spending the night alone in the mountains, was located by law enforcement, unharmed, but in distress on July 4, 2020.

Immediately following the report of the shootings on July 3, 2020, the Sierra County Sheriff's Office responded to the scene and coordinated a massive law enforcement response to the area where the shooter was last seen. Responding agencies included: U.S. Forest Service Law Enforcement, California Highway Patrol, California Dept. of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW), Grass Valley Police Department, Nevada, Placer, Plumas, Shasta, and Yuba counties. Additionally, helicopters from the California Highway Patrol, Washoe County Sheriff's Office, and Placer County Sheriff's Office assisted throughout the incident.

On July 4, 2020, two Fish and Wildlife Wardens who were maintaining a checkpoint in the area of Saddleback Road and Eureka Mine Road came across Mr. Conway in the stolen side-by-side. Mr. Conway refused commands to stop, instead swerving to attempt to injure the two wardens.

A vehicle pursuit ensued with the Wardens following Mr. Conway down Saddleback Road, with another Warden traveling up Saddleback Road to attempt to intercept Mr. Conway before he reached Downieville.

The Warden coming up Saddleback made contact with Mr. Conway and a collision occurred. As Mr. Conway attempted to flee on foot, he was shot by the Warden.

Mr. Conway was taken to Enloe where he was treated for his injuries.

The Office of the Attorney General assisted the Sierra County District's Attorney's office in prosecuting this matter through a preliminary hearing, a motion to dismiss and two competency trials. The outcome of which was Mr. Conway's entry of a plea as follows:

- Second degree murder, a violation of Penal Code section 187(a), including a gun enhancement;
- Two counts of attempted murder; and
- Two counts of assault on the Fish and Wildlife Wardens.

Mr. Conway has been in custody since July 4, 2020 and is currently being housed at the Nevada County Jail in Nevada City.



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Mr. Conway will be sentenced on May 16, 2023 at 10:00 a.m. in the Sierra Superior Court.