

Suspect arrested in vehicle theft

November 23, 2019



The Del Norte County Sheriff's Office is investigating a burglary off Elk Valley Road reported just prior to 5 p.m. Tuesday.

Deputies said a suspect broke into a residence and stole a vehicle from the garage. They added that the suspect had obtained keys to the vehicle in a previous burglary.

The sheriff's office dispatcher was notified of the theft and forwarded a description of the vehicle. National Park Service employees saw it being driven near the Smith River area and followed in pursuit.

Law enforcement officials said local police and the California Highway Patrol joined in the chase when the driver refused to pull over.

They said the pursuit continued for several miles until heading up Low Divide Road, where the vehicle stopped and its driver fled on foot.

Officers said the suspect was tracked by law enforcement, with the assistance of a nearby resident, into dense wilderness. A perimeter was established and the Del Norte County Sheriff's Office requested assistance from the Pelican Bay Crisis Response Team and a K9 unit.

After several hours of tracking the suspect by foot through the wilderness, law officers located and apprehended Steven Louis Sills, 42.

Sills was booked at the Del Norte County Jail and charged with vehicle theft, evading a peace officer with wanton disregard for safety, possession of a controlled substance and paraphernalia, and violating probation.

His bail was set at \$15,000.