

USDA - FOREST SERVICE
INCIDENTS OF VIOLENCE DIRECTED TOWARDS
FS EMPLOYEES OR WORK FACILITIES
FOR THE YEAR OF 2005

This incident narrative includes significant acts of violence, threats or interferences that were directed towards Forest Service (FS) employees, facilities and/or vehicles during calendar year 2005. Only those incidents voluntarily reported in the Law Enforcement and Investigations (LEI) Weekly Report have been included, and the status of the case is that at the time of the original report. Therefore, this report is not a complete listing of all incidents that have occurred, nor their final disposition. It was assembled by the Washington Office, LEI staff.

REGION 1

Lolo National Forest - On 8/11, two Law Enforcement Officers (LEO's) responded to assist Missoula County Sheriff's Department after a woman was beaten severely by her husband in Miller Creek area. Deputies located the woman and EMS personnel transported her to hospital. The LEO's continued tracking the suspect and located him 1/4 mile into the woods on national forest system (NFS) lands. He again fled from them and then hid. An LEO located the suspect and held him at gunpoint until the other LEO arrived. The suspect's pit bull dog got away from the suspect and attacked both LEO's. Due to a crossfire situation, the LEO's could not shoot the dog, but the suspect eventually got the dog under control. The dog was tied to a tree and the suspect was arrested. Animal control responded and the dog was put in quarantine. One LEO was treated and released at a local hospital.

REGION 2

Pike National Forest - On the evening of 8/23, a man employed by a Forest Service concessionaire as a host at a picnic area on the Pikes Peak Ranger District called 911 to report that he had just killed his wife and son and planned to kill himself. Responding Deputies from the Teller County Sheriff's Department found the 50 year-old man, his 46 year-old wife and 3 year-old son dead from gunshot wounds inside a motor home at a Forest Service day use site. An LEO assisted the following day with closing the site to the public and media, coordinating with the concessionaire company to obtain identification and next of kin information, and arranging to have the couple's personal property removed before the site was re-opened to the public.

REGION 3

Apache-Sitgreaves National Forest - On 10/13, an LEO and Sheriff's Department Deputies responded to a campground on the Alpine Ranger District after the campground hosts reported that a man had threatened them. The man, swinging a hammer and a flashlight at the hosts, had asked them to take him somewhere. The hosts told the man they could not give him a ride and he then took their golf cart. The officers located and stopped the man driving the golf cart on a National Forest System (NFS) road and took him back to his campsite where his friends said he had ingested illegal mushrooms and alcohol. He was taken to a hospital where he was treated and released, then transported to jail by the Sheriff's Department.

Carson National Forest - On the afternoon of 1/9, an LEO was forced off an NFS road into a ditch in order to avoid a collision with an on-coming car on a curve. As the LEO was attempting to get his vehicle out of the ditch and back onto the road, the offending vehicle backed up over 100 yards and pulled along side his patrol vehicle. As the vehicle came to a stop, both occupants started yelling derogatory comments and threatening bodily harm. The LEO heard the action of a firearm being worked and saw the passenger was holding a rifle. The LEO warned the suspects and quickly drove forward to escape the location, then turned around to pursue them. The suspects failed to yield to the LEO for several miles, and then suddenly stopped their vehicle sideways in the roadway. Both occupants aggressively approached the LEO's vehicle and refused officer instructions. The passenger then fled in the suspect vehicle. As the LEO initiated an arrest of the driver and disarmed him of a knife, a shot was fired from the direction the passenger had fled in the vehicle. During the distraction the driver fled on foot and barricaded himself in an adjacent house. The LEO withdrew, and after backup officers from New Mexico Game and Fish, New Mexico State Police and Rio Arriba County Sheriff's Department arrived, the group attempted to make contact with the barricaded

suspect. As the barricaded suspect yelled obscenities at the officers from inside the mobile home, additional shots were fired in the direction of the officers from the direction of where the other suspect had fled. The officers withdrew to a safe location down the road and set up a road block. The man suspected of firing the shots was shortly thereafter apprehended at the road block. The suspect at the house has been identified as the owner of the home.

On 10/27, a janitorial contractor on the El Rito Ranger District called an LEO to report that the contractor's 35 year-old stepson was inebriated and had become belligerent in the ranger station parking lot. The LEO responded to their location where the stepson advanced towards the LEO and threatened the officer with bodily harm. The LEO placed the man under arrest, but had to use physical force due to resistance from the man. The man received medical treatment and was then taken before the U.S. Magistrate on charges of assault on a federal officer.

Cibola National Forest - On 3/26 at 5:00 p.m., an LEO issued a violation notice to a man for illegal possession of alcohol. At 9:52 p.m. on the same day, a male subject left a recorded message on the Region 3 Law Enforcement and Investigations (LEI) office phone threatening the life of the LEO. The voice mail was discovered by office personnel on 3/28 and the LEO recognized the voice mail as that of the man who received the violation notice on 3/26. On 3/28, a Special Agent (SA) obtained an arrest warrant for the man for intimidation of a witness and unlawful use of a telephone. He was arrested and booked into the Bernalillo County Detention Center. Bond was set at \$35,000.

Coconino National Forest - On 11/5, an LEO was patrolling on the Red Rock Ranger District and observed a man driving a truck on an NFS road at a slow rate of speed. Approximately ten minutes later, the LEO observed the same vehicle stuck in the creek bed. The driver was sitting on a large boulder drinking a can of beer. The LEO contacted the man who had slurred speech and blood shot eyes and stated he had driven the vehicle after drinking about three or four beers. The LEO determined the man was under the influence and advised the man he was under arrest. He failed to obey the commands of the LEO and threw a five gallon plastic container at her. The LEO deployed OC spray, but it was ineffective. He proceeded to run from the LEO and throw rocks at her. The LEO drew her primary duty weapon and commanded the man to drop a rock and get on the ground. He rolled to his stomach and as the LEO began to retrieve her handcuffs, began to move again and proceeded to get up. The LEO drew her extendable baton and attempted to strike the man on his calf, but it was ineffective. An Arizona Department of Public Safety unit arrived and fired a taser gun at the man and he was subdued. The man was handcuffed and arrested. Medical response personnel determined the man did not have any injuries and he was transported to jail.

REGION 4

Sawtooth National Forest - On 7/15, an LEO and a Twin Falls Sheriff's Department Deputy were working together after dark when they observed an ATV operator driving carelessly on the Minidoka Ranger District. When the Deputy approached the ATV he determined that the operator might be intoxicated and ordered the operator off the machine. The suspect accelerated the ATV, hit the Deputy on the foot, and fled the scene. The suspect turned his headlights off to elude detection. The LEO and Deputy pursued the suspect in the LEO's vehicle and eventually the suspect stopped. When the Deputy attempted to arrest him, the suspect put the ATV in reverse and ran over the Deputy's foot again, injuring the Deputy's hand that was caught in the rack on the ATV. The suspect continued to physically resist both officers until handcuffed and the LEO sustained strained muscles of his right hip and thigh. Another Deputy arrived and transported the suspect to jail. Both the LEO and Deputy were treated at the hospital for their injuries and released. The suspect is being charged with two counts of battery, DUI, resisting, eluding an officer, and driving while suspended. On 8/11, the man entered a guilty plea to one count of battering a peace officer and one count of felony eluding a peace officer. He was also charged with violating the terms of his probation. The man was sentenced to serve two to five years in prison, with a judicial review after six months.

REGION 5

Angeles National Forest - On 10/17, LEO's began entry into a marijuana plantation and saw two suspects approaching them. The LEO's ordered the suspects to surrender. One suspect fled, while the other suspect initially complied and surrendered. The suspect then kicked at a K-9 Officer, and K-9 Chiwa bit the suspect. At the same time, the rest of the team moved towards the garden and two shots were fired in close proximity to the officers. As the Officers took cover, the shooting suspect fled and escaped. A

campsite in the immediate area contained processed marijuana, ammunition for three different calibers of weapons, and two loaded shotguns – one with an expended shell in the chamber. The arrested suspect was provided medical care by EMS personnel for the K-9 bite and then transported to jail. Searches of the area revealed additional evidence including cultivation sites, harvested marijuana, and processing structures. One LEO suffered a severe ankle injury during the operation. Over 78 kilos of processed marijuana was seized.

Eldorado National Forest - On 12/30, a woman pleaded guilty in State Superior Court to battery on an officer with injury, a felony. The charges were the result of an incident that occurred when a Forest Protection Officer (FPO) and an LEO responded to a report of people illegally residing on NFS lands on the Pacific Ranger District. The woman had a warrant for her arrest, but refused to be placed under arrest and fought with the officers. During a struggle on the ground, she bit the LEO on the wrist, causing a puncture wound. The woman was sentenced to serve 180 days in county jail.

Inyo National Forest - On 6/9, the Inyo Patrol Captain and the Lone Pine LEO joined forces to investigate the intimidation of two Forest Service Archaeologists. The employees were recording an archaeological site in the Inyo Mountains when a man camped under a tarp nearby became verbally violent and frightened them. The employees called the dispatch center and were instructed to leave the area immediately. The following day the two LEO's went to the area and located several campers in the area connected with the man who intimidated the employees. The group was conducting a "vision quest" and was fasting for four days. They were to be silent and have no contact with one another. They kept track of one another by leaving notes and rocks, known as lifelines, piled in a certain fashion to let their partner know they were okay. The man was yelling because he did not want to have his lifeline disturbed although it was placed in the middle of an archaeological site. The group was warned about disturbing archaeological sites and intimidating Forest Service employees or the public.

On 7/17, an LEO responded to a Forest Service campground after an assault on a concessionaire campground manager by a campground host. The LEO made sure the incident was not going to affect the public, and stood by while the suspect packed his belongings. The Sheriff's Department was already on scene and advised the victim he could make a citizens arrest if desired. He elected to only fire the man and have him leave the area.

Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit - On 6/30, a man pleaded guilty to assault with a deadly weapon (non-firearm) for running down an FPO on 2/19 during winter snowmobile patrol of a closure area. The incident occurred when another FPO was talking to the man who suddenly started his snowmobile and accelerated directly towards the FPO. The FPO was struck at knee level and tumbled over the oncoming snowmobile. The man attempted to flee the area, but was pursued by the FPO to a parking area where an LEO and an Eldorado Sheriff's Department Deputy arrested the man. The FPO was treated at a hospital for injuries to his knee. The man was sentenced to serve 30 days in jail, with one day credit, ordered to pay full restitution for medical fees and monetary loss to the employee, write a letter to the editor of the local newspaper, give community talks to snowmobile groups explaining the consequences of his actions, three years probation, not to ride a snowmobile for the term of his probation, not to associate with the other party in the incident for term of probation. Additionally, the man was ordered to forfeit his snowmobile to the El Dorado County Sheriff's Department Search and Rescue team.

While checking the Freel Peak Closure area on snowmobiles, two Forest Service employees attempted to contact three snowmobilers in the closure area. The three people saw the employees and scattered. One of the men stopped near one of the employees and was informed that the area was a closure. The man admitted knowing the area was closed. As the other Forest Service employee got off his snowmobile and approached the front of the man's snowmobile, the man suddenly started his snowmobile up and 'gunned it' driving directly at the employee. The snowmobile struck the employee at knee level and the man continued to attempt to flee the area. The Forest Service employee rolled off the snowmobile, got up and proceeded to follow the man. The man broke his front ski steering and drove to the end of road where he was met by an LEO and a Sheriff's Department Deputy. He was cooperative at that point and agreed to give a statement. The man admitted their plan on what to do if spotted by the Forest Service and his actions during the incident. He was arrested and booked into county jail on two felony counts and two misdemeanor counts. Warrants will be pursued for the two other men. The employee went to the hospital after his knee began to stiffen.

San Bernardino National Forest - On 5/25, the Applewhite Campground Host in Lytle Creek was the victim of a home-invasion robbery. The host opened his motor home door after someone knocked and was

rushed by two suspects who knocked him to the floor, tied his hands, tied his feet to his hands, and cut the phone wires. The suspects ransacked the motor home and took the host's money and campground fees. After the suspects left, the host managed to untie himself and call out on the Forest Service radio and law enforcement responded. The next morning, the host was transported to the doctor for back and neck injuries.

Sierra National Forest - On 8/15, LEO's and Fresno Sheriff's Department were dispatched to the Ross Crossing Road near Camp Elowin regarding a suicidal man who was armed with a scoped 7mm magnum rifle, a shotgun, a .22 rifle and a compound bow. The man said good-bye to family members and left for his usual hunting area where his brother confronted him and a physical altercation occurred. The brother left and called 911, reporting the man was drunk, hostile towards law enforcement, and armed. Officers located the man's vehicle stuck on a spur road and spent several hours trying to call him down off the mountain. He ran away into the woods and was located the following morning in the Dinkey Creek area by an LEO and Deputies. The man was extremely uncooperative and had to be restrained. He was transported in restraints to the hospital and placed on a 72-hour mental health hold. A review of his criminal history showed a conviction that would prevent him from possessing firearms and state charges are pending.

Stanislaus National Forest - On 8/7, a Miwok Ranger District Off-Highway Vehicle (OHV) Specialist reported to an LEO that he had encountered a hostile individual riding an ATV on an NFS Road designated as a highway and signed against OHV use. While in the process of attempting to write the rider a citation, the man became very agitated, began to yell at the employee, and accused him of being part of a conspiracy with the courts and law enforcement to harass OHV riders. The Forest Service employee broke off the contact and reported his name and campsite number to an LEO. The rider was camped with a group of 15 other OHV users. Two LEO's responded to the campground where the rider was instantly polite and apologetic. The violator was cited and the entire group counseled about regulations and cooperation with Forest Service employees engaged in their duties.

REGION 6

No incidents reported.

REGION 8

Daniel Boone National Forest - An LEO and an SA were ending a late shift on the London Ranger District when they stopped for fuel at a 24-hour gas station. The cashier advised the LEO of a situation in a nearby NFS area known locally as an off-road haven and party place. The cashier advised that a loud, rough crowd was partying in the area and were most likely intoxicated. When the LEO and SA arrived on the scene, they saw a large campfire with no one around, but they heard loud voices nearby. They followed the voices and arrived at another bonfire where two males and two females were present. The two males were intoxicated and were also found to be in possession of marijuana. While the Officers were dealing with this group, a vehicle approached the area, with the occupants shouting and singing. When the operator of the vehicle saw the Officers, he tried to hurriedly back away. The LEO ran alongside the vehicle ordering the driver to stop. The driver continued to backup until he could not go any further. With the LEO standing approximately 40 feet from the vehicle, the driver put the vehicle into a forward gear and floored it, aiming directly at the LEO. The LEO jumped out of the way and avoided being struck by the speeding vehicle. As the vehicle passed, the LEO was able to knock out the driver's window, and the driver stopped the vehicle. The three occupants were intoxicated and in possession of marijuana and received violation notices. The driver was also charged with wanton endangerment.

Francis Marion & Sumter National Forests - On 10/8, an LEO saw a vehicle parked along an NFS road on the Francis Marion National Forest. The LEO shined his alley lights into the vehicle and illuminated a man and woman in the vehicle. The LEO left the vehicle and waited several minutes to allow the woman to put on her clothes and then walked back to the vehicle to check on her welfare. The male driver suddenly accelerated and drove past the LEO who was standing next to the vehicle's passenger front quarter panel. The vehicle traveled up onto the NFS road and around the rear of the LEO vehicle, striking it in the right rear bumper. When the vehicle went into a ditch parallel to the LEO vehicle, the LEO ran back and got into his vehicle. The vehicle then came up out of the ditch and the LEO activated emergency lights and siren. The vehicle led the LEO on a pursuit of approximately five miles while the LEO tracked the pursuit with the Berkley County Sheriff's Department. The pursuit ended when the driver tried to avoid a roadblock set up by the Sheriff's Department. On 10/11, the LEO met the driver and his mother. After conferring with the South

Carolina Highway Patrol, which is investigating the incident, the LEO placed the driver under arrest and transported him to the county jail.

On 7/3, an Oconee County Sheriff's Department Deputy called for emergency assistance while patrolling on the Andrew Pickens Ranger District. An LEO and an SA responded and found that the Deputy had encountered a man who was using crystal methamphetamine and was in possession of a large amount of the drug. When the officer tried to take the man into custody, he resisted. The officer was forced to fight with the man, including pepper spraying him three times with no apparent effect. The man fled the scene in a vehicle when he saw the Forest Service officers arriving. The LEO and SA followed him the man as he drove and tossed evidence out of his vehicle for about 17 miles, failing to stop for the blue lights and siren. Oconee County Sheriff's Department used "stop sticks" three times to get the vehicle to stop. With all four of the man's vehicle's tires completely off their rims, he continued driving until the vehicle would go no further. He was taken into custody by the LEO and SA after a short foot chase and a scuffle.

George Washington and Jefferson National Forests - On 8/18, two individuals who had been charged with vandalism at a recreation area on the New River Valley Ranger District were found guilty in U.S. Magistrate Court. The two had vandalized a bath house at a campground; broke several fixtures, messed on the floor, and set a fire inside. The Judge was upset at the two because the Forest Service had to close the campground for a couple of weeks to clean up the mess. They were sentenced to pay fines of \$125 each and to serve 30 days in jail, along with supervised probation for a year. All but one day of the jail sentence was suspended and both were ordered to pay \$900 in restitution to the Forest Service. Both are banned from NFS lands during their year of supervised probation.

Land Between The Lakes National Recreation Area - On 5/28, LEO's responded to a report of a domestic assault. The female victim had been hit repeatedly by a man who pulled her hair and threw her to the ground. The man and two other people left the area in a vehicle and an LEO stopped them. As the LEO was ordering the suspect out of the vehicle, the intoxicated man became belligerent and made an aggressive move toward the LEO. The LEO quickly applied pepper spray to the man, who then went to the ground and was secured by the LEO. The LEO arrested him for assault in the fourth degree, domestic violence, alcohol intoxication, and resisting arrest.

National Forests In Florida - On 9/27, an LEO received a phone call from a Florida State University Biologist that his permitted study plots on the Apalachicola National Forest had been vandalized. The associate professor showed the LEO where 18 out of the 45 stakes he had placed in the plots had been removed. The investigation is continuing.

On 9/25, an LEO responded to an assault on a campground host by a visitor after the host advised the visitor that the boat ramp was closed due to the recent hurricanes. As the host turned to leave, the visitor attempted to strike him with a fire iron, but the host blocked the blow with his arm. The visitor and others with him fled. The host suffered two small abrasions.

On 7/4, an LEO received a call concerning the assault of a Forest Service volunteer on the Ocala National Forest. The volunteer located several people in a day use area prior to it opening for the day and asked them to leave. As they were walking out, they assaulted the volunteer who suffered a bump on his head. The Marion County Sheriff's Department responded to the location and investigated the incident.

On 10/23, an LEO responded to a campground on the Ocala National Forest after a Forest Service volunteer was bitten by a dog and suffered a puncture wound below his right knee. The volunteer was treated at the scene and referred to medical help for a rabies shot. The owner of the dog was located at a campsite inside his RV. The dog, a 120-pound female German Shepard, was reported to be an ex-police dog from Germany. The owner stated the dog had broken its choke collar and bitten the volunteer as the volunteer approached the campsite. The owner located veterinarian records showing the dog's rabies shot had expired on 7/25/04.

National Forests & Grasslands in Texas - On 6/11, two LEO's and a STEP student encountered three people on four-wheelers in a closed area on the Sam Houston National Forest. All three fled when the LEO's signaled them to stop. When finally cut off on a fire lane, the drivers attempted to run over one of the LEO's. The four-wheelers were recognized as being the same that fled from San Jacinto Sheriff's Department officers a few days earlier. One of the four wheelers is equipped with nitrous oxide and has been paced by Deputies at speeds of over 90 mph.

Ouachita Civilian Conservation Center - On 4/28, an LEO responded to call that a staff member had been shoved by a student. Upon the Officer's arrival, the student directed obscenities at the Officer and was placed under arrest. Federal charges are pending.

REGION 9

Superior National Forest - On 4/26, a Forest employee reported continued unsolicited advances from a former co-worker over the past 10 years, even though numerous attempts to have the advances stopped. The coworker was interviewed by the local Sheriff's Department and advised of the consequences if their actions continued. The co-worker agreed to stop the harassment.

On 9/8, the Patrol Captain received a call from a Reserve LEO regarding a shooting that occurred the day before involving a District employee. A Recreation/Wilderness employee, who is also a certified FPO, had been shot at while conducting routine regulatory duties. The FPO was not injured and the investigation is continued.

Wayne National Forest - On 5/28, an LEO observed two vehicles parked in the grass at Lane Farm Campground and advised the group camping about not parking on the grass. One man stated he would move the vehicles after he was done eating. The LEO agreed and left the area. The LEO returned later in the evening and observed one of the vehicles was still parked in the grass. The owner of the truck who was asleep in a tent was woken up. He yelled and swore at the LEO for waking him up to move his truck, and started to walk towards the LEO in an aggressive manner with clenched fists. The LEO was able to stop the aggression with verbal commands, although the man continued to yell and swear at the LEO. While the LEO was issuing the citation, the man again clenched his fists and told the LEO "I will bust your ass". The man's wife calmed him down and a citation was issued for undesignated parking.

Monongahela National Forest - On 6/26, a man threatened an LEO who was assisting with an arrest of another person at the Rainbow Family of Living Light permitted gathering area on the Forest. The man charged officers, but backed off when an LEO drew a baton and told him to get back or be struck. The man maintained a fighting posture and stated he was going to hit the LEO. The man was issued a mandatory appearance violation notice, for which he was subsequently found guilty of and ordered to pay a \$775 fine.

REGION 10

Tongass National Forest - On 11/1, an LEO came upon a man walking in the middle of a road in a remote area of Prince of Wales Island on the Thome Bay Ranger District. The man advised he was involved in a domestic dispute with his brother, who had kicked him out of a vehicle. The brother drove by and was stopped by the LEO. The LEO noted an odor of alcohol from the man, and observed a handgun on the passenger seat. Before the LEO could secure the weapon, the man reached for the handgun. He then relinquished the weapon to the LEO, but refused to exit the vehicle and had to be extricated from the vehicle. The man refused a field sobriety test, and the LEO arrested him and transported him to the Craig Police Department for suspicion of driving while intoxicated. While at the jail, the man attempted to escape before being administered a breathalyzer test. He was re-apprehended immediately and was arraigned the following day in state court for six misdemeanors and one felony.

WASHINGTON OFFICE

No incidents reported.