



"Safety, Professionalism & Community Service"

Cedric Crook
Interim Chief of Police

Press Release UPD Case #22-1686

Date:	August 22, 2022	
Address:	1200 block Airport Road	
Suspect:	17-year-old juvenile (name withheld)	
Violations:	451(c) Arson 182(a)(1) PC Criminal Conspiracy 32 PC Accessory After the Fact 454(a)(2) PC Arson During State of Emergency	Felony Felony Felony Felony
Suspect:	Gabriel Ruiz, 18-year-old male of Ukiah	
Violations:	451(c) Arson 182(a)(1) PC Criminal Conspiracy 454(a)(2) PC Arson During State of Emergency	Felony Felony Felony
Suspect:	17-year-old juvenile (name withheld)	
Violations:	451(c) Arson 182(a)(1) PC Criminal Conspiracy 454(a)(2) PC Arson During State of Emergency	Felony Felony Felony

On 8/22/22, at approximately 1:27 PM, UPD Officers were dispatched to the area of a dry field east of Airport Road near Costco for a report of a vegetation fire. Witnesses described seeing a distress flare being fired from a vehicle toward the field and seeing smoke rise from the field moments later. The vehicle then fled the area northbound.

Ukiah Police Department Officers and Ukiah Valley Fire Authority responded to the incident. UVFA personnel were able to contain and extinguish the fire quickly. No structures were damaged as a result. Upon speaking with witnesses, it was learned that a silver sedan containing what appeared to be three young male subjects were believed to have fired the flare before leaving the area. Evidence supporting the use of a flare gun was located at the scene.

Utilizing City of Ukiah FLOCK license plate recognition cameras, investigators were able to obtain photos containing the suspect vehicle, its license plate, and a view of the occupants and ultimately led to the identification of the suspects. Additional investigation yielded further evidence that a flare gun was used by the suspects.

The area was searched for the vehicle but it was not located at that time. The vehicle's license plate was entered into the FLOCK camera database which automatically alerts Officers if the vehicle is observed in the future.



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On 08/25/22, the FLOCK system alerted Officers that the suspect vehicle was being driven in the city. Officers responded to the area of the alerts, ultimately locating the vehicle and performing a traffic stop. The 17-year-old driver was identified as the same subject who had been driving on the day of the incident. The juvenile was placed under arrest and booked at Juvenile Hall.

On the night of 09/19/22, a second suspect, 18-year-old Gabriel Ruiz, was arrested by MCSO on unrelated charges. Ruiz was interviewed by a UPD investigator regarding this case following his arrest and additional charges are being submitted to the District Attorney's Office. As of 09/21/22, the third juvenile suspect has not been located.

Prepared by: Detective Sergeant Andrew Snyder #D5