

Narrative

In accordance with C.R.S. 19-1-301 through 304 concerning the Children's Code Records and Information Act, names of juveniles may or may not be released to the public depending upon the juvenile's involvement in the case.

Will you mention a Juvenile Name: Yes No

Arresting Agency Case Number: **16-4041**

On 7/09/16, I was contacted by Sgt. Zierlein reference the large scale fire occurring near Nederland. The fire eventually grew to 600 acres burned with three structures confirmed lost. Approximately 1,000 people were evacuated.

Several reporting parties had stated they saw three transients camping in the area where the fires occurred. The transients had previous contacts by law enforcement and were later identified as Jimmy Andrew Suggs DOB 06/25/88, Elizabeth Blair Burdeshaw DOB 08/17/95 and Zack Ryan Kuykendall, DOB 02/22/90.

Suggs, Kuykendall and Burdeshaw were later interviewed. They stated they had been camping in the area and reading their bibles. They had built fires the first two nights but not the third. They camped in three different places all accessed by foot. They then voluntarily agreed to show investigators where their campsites had been.

We then attempted to find the first campsite but we were unsuccessful, they could not locate it. We then proceeded to the third campsite which was approximately 100 yards east of Cold Spring and Hwy 119. When we arrived Suggs stated, there is my machete. He then walked over to the grass and produced a machete. He stated that it was his and he had left it there. He had also stated during the interviews he had used the machete to help dig the fire pit. We then examined a small campsite located next to the river. There was a small fire pit next to a tree. This campfire had been located next to the river and had not caused any damage.

Next we hiked back to our vehicles and discussed going to campsite 2. However, there was active fire in the area. Suggs then stated, "that's right where we were", pointing toward the fire on the hillside. He also stated, "it had to be us there was no one else around". We tried to hike there but there was a hotshot crew above us cutting down trees and it was not safe. The fire investigator that was with us then went up to the second campsite by himself as described by Suggs, Kuykendall and Burdeshaw and took pictures.

I also learned that one of the first reporting parties indicated the origin of the fire as being where Suggs had pointed and where their campsite was described as being.

A few hours later we then re-interviewed Suggs, Kuykendall and Burdeshaw. The fire investigator then showed them pictures of the area they had described as being their campsite. Both Suggs and Burdeshaw stated that it looked like their campsite. They specifically indicated that a stump and the geography looked familiar. Suggs stated that they had not put dirt on the fire, only the rocks they had surrounded it with. Both Suggs and Kuykendall had a discussion about doing more to put out the fire but ultimately decided not to.

I then spoke alone with the fire investigator and asked him how sure he was that their campsite was the point of origin for the fire and he said "90 percent". He later viewed photographs from the first firefighter on scene and stated he was even more sure.

I later learned that the campsites were on private property. One of the campsites was zoned for agricultural use and the other two were not. Suggs, Kuykendall and Burdeshaw did not have a map or know whose land they were on.

End of Report