



CARBON COUNTY
SHERIFF

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Press Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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On August 28, 2013, Carbon County Sheriff's Office deputies were dispatched to the Gordon Creek/ Pinnacle Peak area on several people taking railroad rail from the Utah Railway Hiawatha line. It was discovered a large amount of rail and other metal materials were stolen and then "scraped" for a large sum of money.

Deputy Travis Henrie initiated a traffic stop on two vehicles matching the description of the reported vehicles involved. The first vehicle, a flatbed pickup occupied by the driver Shelly Buchanan and passenger Jason Avery, had numerous pieces of railroad rail, on the bed of the vehicle. This rail had been cut with a torch into pieces that could be loaded on the pickup. The occupants of the second vehicle were identified as Jose Gurule and Pam Thompson. With the assistance of Lt. Tory Christiansen, Detective Roger Taylor and Detective Mike Hreinson, interviews and a follow up investigation revealed the rail had been taken from a remote location along the Utah Railway Hiawatha Railroad line. Shelly Buchanan, Jose Gurule and Pam Thompson were arrested, booked into the Carbon County Jail and charged with theft and criminal mischief, each a third degree felony.

The continued follow up investigation, in conjunction with Utah Railway, has revealed at least five separate locations where rail and other railroad equipment have been stolen. This includes track, disassembled and taken from the existing rail line, as well as all associated railroad equipment and parts used in the installation of railroad track. Utah Railway reported their losses at \$108,000.00, with this total possibly increasing as the investigation continues.

The continuing investigation has produced additional arrests. These arrests include Guy Grant, Robert Straley, Brian Oliverson and William Wilson. They have been booked into the Carbon County Jail and charged with theft and criminal mischief, each a third degree felony. The suspects involved are stealing the material because of its value when they trade the metal to a metal recycling business for cash. The Utah Railway has reported that they are missing over 52 tons of metal material. It is estimated that metal stolen from the railroad has yielded over \$10,000 for the suspects. The investigation is ongoing with additional arrests expected.

Thanks to the assistance from citizens reporting this suspicious activity and the diligent investigation of the deputies, a large scale operation of scraping illegally obtained metal has been severely impacted. If the public witnesses or are suspicious of any activity in the rural areas of the county they should contact the Price Dispatch Center at 435-637-0890 or the Carbon County Sheriff's Office at 435-636-3251.

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