

Names of victim and Montezuma County deputy - Durango Herald, The (CO) - March 15, 2018

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The names of the victim and Montezuma County deputy involved in a deadly shootout in McElmo Canyon Feb. 15 have been released by the FBI and Sheriff's Office.

On Wednesday, FBI spokeswoman Sandra Barker identified the person killed as **Fordell Hill**, 27. She did not say where he lived.

As part of standard procedure, Sgt. Ed Oxley was put on paid administrative leave pending an investigation of the fatal shooting, said Sheriff Steve Nowlin.

The incident began after Oxley pulled over an eastbound white sedan with three occupants on County Road G for a broken brake light and no visible registration.

But while attempting to contact the driver, the suspect did a U-turn and sped westbound toward Utah. While in pursuit, someone in the car fired shots at Oxley, according to Nowlin.

The chase continued on County Road G for more than 10 miles and ended a few hundred yards into Utah, just west of the old Ismay Trading Post. The vehicle had blown a tire and was driving on a bare wheel rim.

According to Nowlin, the driver parked the sedan broadside in the road, got out and raised his hands to surrender. The car rolled backward into a ditch and started a brush fire that sent out a plume of smoke.

Nowlin said that an occupant of the vehicle continued to fire upon Oxley, who fired back, killing an unidentified passenger.

The driver and other passenger were taken into custody by the Sheriff's Office, and turned over to Navajo police. The deputy reportedly administered CPR to the injured suspect, who died at the scene.

It was not reported how many shots were fired, but Nowlin said the patrol vehicle was shot up.

Paul Davis, who lives on County Road G near where the car crashed, said he saw officers in pursuit, then a short time later heard five to six gunshots, a pause, then more gunshots.

The incident closed McElmo Road in both directions for more than 8 hours while the fatal shooting was investigated. A line of backed-up drivers were forced to turn around and find alternative routes. Fire crews from San Juan County Utah arrived to fight the brush fire.

Working out which jurisdiction where the final shootout took place was difficult, Nowlin said. It was determined that it occurred on Navajo trust land in Utah, and therefore was under the jurisdiction of the FBI.

The identities of the passengers have not been released by the FBI, Nowlin said.

"They haven't even released that information to us," he said.

Nowlin said they are waiting results of the FBI investigation so the Sheriff's Office can fully investigate the portion of criminal action that occurred on the Montezuma County side of the Utah-Colorado border.

"We are also still waiting to get our patrol vehicle back and the equipment in it," he said. "We're down an officer while the investigation continues."

Nowlin said they are cooperating with the FBI.

It was the second fatal shooting involving a Montezuma County deputy in eight months. On July 4, Tyrone Orvy Peabody was killed by a deputy after he was fired upon responding to a family disturbance and suspected DUI in Pleasant View.

"It goes to show the types of crimes we have to deal with are getting more violent and more dangerous," Nowlin said. "We have stepped up training to appropriately handle these types of situations."

jmimiaga@the-journal.com

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