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United States Attorney's Office
District of Oregon

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Oregon Woman Sentenced to Federal Probation After Stealing and Crashing Vehicle Belonging to Tribe

EUGENE, Ore.—A former employee of the Burns Paiute Tribe was sentenced to federal probation today after she stole and crashed a vehicle owned by the Tribe used to transport students to and from school events.

Sara Janeese Hawley, 37, a resident of Burns, Oregon, was sentenced to three years' federal probation. Hawley was also ordered to pay restitution to the Burns Paiute Tribe.

According to court documents, Hawley used an employee access code to enter the Burns Paiute Tribe's Tribal Housing Department building where she took the keys to and stole a Dodge Caravan minivan owned by the Tribe. Hawley, who had earlier used methamphetamine and inhalants, drove away in and later crashed and totaled the vehicle.

On April 21, 2022, a federal grand jury in Eugene returned an indictment charging Hawley with embezzlement and theft from an Indian Tribal Organization. On August 23, 2022, she pleaded guilty to the single charge.

This case was investigated by the Bureau of Indian Affairs and the FBI. It was prosecuted by Jeffrey S. Sweet, Assistant U.S. Attorney for the District of Oregon.

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