



CITY OF FORT BRAGG

News Release

October 16, 2019

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

SAFETY MEASURES ON COASTAL TRAIL

The suspect, Vincent Galvan, in the recent Rape by Force and False Imprisonment arrest, was released from the Mendocino County Jail on Tuesday, October 15th. The District Attorney needs a more detailed victim statement in order to charge the suspect with sexual assault. One key to successful prosecution in sexual assault cases is the victim's cooperation. Cooperating with police after a sexual assault is a traumatic, invasive and an emotionally difficult experience. Many victims choose not to fully cooperate and that is their choice, but it makes charging and prosecuting in rape and sexual assault cases more difficult for law enforcement.

This incident occurred in the late evening on October 10th in the restroom at the South Coastal Trail parking area also known as the Noyo Headlands Park. Those restrooms, like all of the restrooms on the Coastal Trail have automatic locking mechanisms on the outer doors that lock around dusk and unlock around dawn. Like other public restrooms in the City, there is an ongoing challenge to keep these safe, clean and unoccupied at night. Many transients use the restrooms for temporary shelter by jamming or breaking the locking mechanisms or entering prior to dusk and "camping out." As a regular part of their nightly shift, time allowing, the police patrol these public facilities to ensure they are secured and unoccupied.

In the wake of this event, those patrols are a priority and will occur every evening and every morning. The City's Public Works department is inspecting all of the locks and repairing any locks or doors that may be damaged or not fully functional. The safety of our Community is a priority for the City Council, City Hall and the Police Department. Please help us move this effort forward. If you find a City restroom in need of repair, or observe any incident that indicates abuse or potential assault, call dispatch at (707) 964-0200 and report it. As always, if you see something say something.

Locally, Project Sanctuary provides free services to victims of sexual assault and their families; call (707) 961-1507 for information. Project Sanctuary is hosting a self-defense class this Saturday, October 19th, in the gymnasium at City Hall – anyone interested may call Project Sanctuary to pre-register.

Questions regarding this information should be directed to Tabatha Miller, City Manager, at (707) 961-2823.