

Driver cited in four-vehicle crash west of Prineville

by Cheryl McDermott

A Hubbard, Oregon man was cited for careless driving when his vehicle slid out of control on icy roads, triggering a four-car collision and blocking all four lanes of Highway 126 west of Prineville Wednesday evening, police said.

The Prineville 9-1-1 center received a call reporting a motor vehicle crash near milepost 14 of Highway 126 shortly before 6 p.m. January 10, said Detective Sgt. Travis Jurgens. Crook County Sheriff's deputies were dispatched to investigate what they thought was an accident involving eight-12 vehicles in the passing lanes.

When deputies arrived, they found only four vehicles involved, and all lanes of traffic blocked.

Jenaro Garcia-Garcia, 20, of Hubbard, Oregon was issued a citation for careless driving when he was found to have triggered the four-vehicle crash by driving too fast for the icy road conditions and failing to have proper traction tires, said Sgt. Jurgens.

Garcia-Garcia lost control as he traveled westbound and crossed the center lane into oncoming traffic. As he skidded on the ice, his 1991 Saturn collided with an eastbound 2005 Dodge Caravan driven by 43-year old Mark Richards of Prineville.

The Saturn then slid back into the westbound lane and crashed into a 1999 Ford F-350 pickup driven by 21-year old Benjamin Anderson of Bend.

The Saturn was deflected off the pickup and skidded back into the oncoming lane of traffic, striking a third vehicle, a 1991 Ford Explorer driven by 54-year old Russell Trent of Prineville.

Garcia-Garcia was injured in the crash, and was transported by AirLife helicopter to St. Charles Medical Center in Bend where he was treated and later released.

There were no other serious injuries reported in the crash, which closed all four lanes of the highway for over an hour while the helicopter landed and wreckage was removed, Sgt. Jurgens said.

Oregon State Police troopers, officers from the Prineville Police Department, and Oregon Department of Transportation personnel provided assistance to Crook County Sheriff's deputies at the scene.

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