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PRESS RELEASE

For immediate release

Contact: Carol Shipley

Date: July 13, 2009

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Re: Rocky Lee Snell

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Auto Thief Sentenced to 3 Years Prison

Modesto, California – Stanislaus County District Attorney Birgit Fladager announced today that Rocky Lee Snell, age 32, of Ripon, pled guilty to being a felon in possession of ammunition, auto theft and admitted having a prior auto theft conviction from May 2005 for which he had been placed on probation. Deputy District Attorney Jeff Mangar prosecuted the case for the People.

The case arose out of events that occurred on two separate dates. On September 26, 2007 at approximately 3 p.m., a Ceres Police officer observed Snell in the passenger seat of a stolen red Chevrolet pickup truck being driven northbound on Highway 99 at Whitmore Avenue. After stopping the truck, officers located two .22 caliber bullets in Snell's right front pants pocket. Following his arrest for being a felon in possession of ammunition, Snell bailed out of jail.

On January 3, 2009 at approximately 6 a.m. in the area of Glenwood Drive and Tully Road in Modesto, an officer from the Modesto Police Department observed Snell run a stop sign while driving a 2002 blue Yamaha V-Star motorcycle. When the officer tried to initiate a routine traffic stop, Snell accelerated away. In an attempt to evade the officer, Snell then drove into a muddy field and stopped when his bike slipped and fell in the mud. The officer then observed that the ignition to the motorcycle was damaged and no ignition key was needed to start it. Officers then discovered that the motorcycle was reported stolen out of Modesto on December 22, 2008. Snell claimed that a friend loaned him the motorcycle two days prior.

Upon entry of the plea, the Honorable Scott Steffen sentenced Snell to three years in state prison.

Stanislaus County residents can report suspected vehicle theft activity to their local law enforcement agency or contact the Stanislaus County Auto-Theft Task Force (STANCATT) at: (209) 545-7316.

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