



For Immediate Release

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Wrong Way/Impaired Driver Hits Trooper

Spokane – Early this morning, troopers arrested a 44 year old woman after she drove at least 13 miles eastbound in the westbound lanes of Interstate 90 from Spokane to Liberty Lake. The woman then crashed into a Washington State Patrol (WSP) troopers patrol vehicle before stopping in a local gas station parking lot in Liberty Lake.

WSP communications received the first report of the vehicle traveling the wrong way on the freeway at 11:58 p.m. Troopers immediately began to respond as communications officers watched the vehicle via Washington State Department of Transportation freeway cameras. The vehicle was first reported traveling eastbound in the westbound lanes from milepost 283 (near Freya St). Troopers observed the vehicle at Sullivan Road and drove parallel to the vehicle in the eastbound lanes attempting to get the attention of the driver. The suspect vehicle continued at freeway speeds.

The driver failed to stop and continued the wrong way. A trooper responding from the state line worked to slow westbound traffic as the vehicle approached. The driver continued past the fully marked patrol vehicle at Barker Road. Fortunately, traffic at this time of night was light. Liberty Lake Police officers responded to the area and were able to successfully deploy spike strips but the suspect vehicle did not stop. Another trooper was able to get behind the vehicle and perform a PIT (Pursuit Immobilization Technique) maneuver just west of Liberty Lake. The PIT maneuver was successful but after spinning, the suspect driver took off again and struck the trooper's patrol vehicle. The trooper sustained minor injuries and was transported to an area hospital where he was treated and released.

After striking the trooper, along with a Spokane County Sheriff's Office patrol vehicle, the suspect vehicle continued back westbound in the westbound lanes, taking the Liberty Lake exit. The vehicle finally stopped at the gas station at Liberty Lake Road and Mission Ave. The suspect driver was taken into custody without incident. The driver was identified as Amber Karns, from Hayden, Idaho. Karns was not injured and was transported and booked into the Spokane County Jail. Karns was booked for felony hit & run and felony eluding. Additional charges are expected. WSP detectives were called to the scene and have taken over the investigation.

The WSP would like to thank our local law enforcement agencies who responded to assist in helping get this impaired driver off the roadway. We are happy to report that there were no other collisions or injuries reported during this extremely dangerous incident.

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