



City of Chowchilla POLICE DEPARTMENT

Press Release

Date: March 18, 2008

To: MEDIA

From: David Noblett, Police Sergeant

Subject: **Vandalism at Sports and Leisure Park**

For the 8th time in two weeks, officers from the Chowchilla Police Department responded to the Sports and Leisure Park located in the 600 block of N. 15th Street for the report of graffiti on Monday, March 17, 2008. Everything from the handball courts, Skate Park, playground equipment, bathrooms, and the baseball fields have been vandalized since March 2, 2008. Officers have been called to the park on March 2, March 6, March 8, March 10, March 11, March 14, March 16, and March 17, 2008. As a result of the graffiti, the Skate Park is closed for an entire week which corresponds to Spring Break for the Chowchilla Area students. "At a time when the kids would be enjoying the Skate Park, it is closed because of the actions of a few individuals" stated Sgt. Noblett of the Chowchilla Police Department.

The vandalism has cost the City of Chowchilla thousands of dollars to clean up the graffiti. The costs include paint and man hours to remove the graffiti. Vandalism is a misdemeanor under California law unless the dollar amount is over \$400.00. Damage caused by vandalism that is over \$400.00 is a felony. The punishment for vandalism is imprisonment in the county jail for up to a year or imprisonment in the State Prison plus a monetary fine. In the case of juveniles, the parent/guardian of the minor will be held responsible for the fines and restitution to the property owner.

"Graffiti is a growing problem for every community. Law enforcement needs the assistance of citizens who are not afraid to get involved when they see someone vandalizing any property with graffiti" stated Sgt. Noblett. Anyone who witnesses graffiti is encouraged to call the Chowchilla Police Department.