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PRESS RELEASE
TWO DEFENDANTS CONVICTED IN BEATING DEATH
SENTENCED TO LIFE IN PRISON

April 20, 2010

Curtis Wayne Taylor and Beau Houston Gray were sentenced today in the June 8, 2008 beating death of Travis Smith.

Both defendants were convicted by a jury of second degree murder after a seven week trial. Taylor was also found guilty of a prior "strike" conviction of Battery with Serious Bodily Injury, and several other enhancements, including two prior State Prison commitments. Taylor was sentenced by Judge Stephen Baker to forty-two years and eight months to life in State Prison and Gray was sentenced to nineteen years to life in State Prison.

The defendants were convicted of beating Travis Smith on three separate occasions on the evening of June 8, 2008. On each separate occasion the defendants beat the victim into semi-consciousness, and then would return to continue the beating. The defendants ultimately left the victim to die and threatened witnesses not to talk to the police or call for an ambulance. Travis Smith was found unconscious the next morning by a citizen and was transported to Mercy Hospital where he was diagnosed with numerous skull fractures and massive brain injuries. Travis Smith succumbed to his injuries ten days later. According to Deputy District Attorney Stew Jankowitz, Taylor will have to serve a minimum of 42 years and eight months in State Prison before becoming eligible for parole, and Gray will have to serve a minimum of nineteen years in State Prison before becoming eligible for parole.

The case was investigated by Redding Police Department Investigators Shawn McGinnis and Jon Poletski and prosecuted by Deputy District Attorney Stewart Jankowitz.