

Oglala Sioux Tribe Officer Involved Shooting Summary Detailing Events That Took Place on May 2, 2025

On May 2, 2025, the Fall River County Sheriff's Office requested the South Dakota Division of Criminal Investigation (DCI) to investigate an officer involved shooting that occurred on U.S. Highway 18 in Fall River County. An Oglala Sioux Tribe Department of Public Safety (OST) Officer discharged his duty weapon multiple times at a vehicle operated by Cody Dittman during a vehicle pursuit that began on the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation. The following is a synopsis of the events that occurred on May 2, 2025, and the subsequent investigation that was conducted by the DCI.

SYNOPSIS

On May 2, 2025, at 0628 hours, OST DPS Officer #1 attempted to initiate a traffic stop on a Nebraska plated black Jeep Grand Cherokee near mile post 91 on U.S. Highway 18 within the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation. The vehicle matched the description of a car related to a firearm call in Pine Ridge.

Officer #1 observed the vehicle traveling westbound and attempted a traffic stop. The Jeep rapidly accelerated to speeds over 100 miles per hour as it attempted to elude Officer #1. The pursuit continued on Highway 18 into Fall River County, outside the boundaries of the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation. Officer #1 continued the pursuit of the Jeep and witnessed it change direction by swerving around a school bus. The Jeep began traveling eastbound back toward the reservation at a high rate of speed. Officer #1 observed the driver, later identified as Cody Dittman, operating the Jeep. Two passengers were also observed inside the vehicle.

Officer #2 and Officer #3 were responding from Pine Ridge to assist Officer #1 with the pursuit when they learned the Jeep had turned around and was traveling eastbound back toward the reservation. Officer #2 and Officer #3 deployed spikes near milepost 71 on Highway 18, at the intersection of Slim Buttes Road.

Officer #2 and Officer #3 were outside of their patrol vehicles standing in the north ditch of Highway 18 when the Jeep approached their location. Officer #1 estimated the vehicle was traveling approximately 90 miles per hour.

As the black Jeep approached the spikes, Dittman swerved toward Officer #2 and Officer #3 in the north ditch. As the Jeep drove into the ditch, it came in the direction of Officer #2. Officer #2 drew his duty pistol and discharged

three rounds toward the driver of the Jeep. A front seat passenger was struck once in the upper right arm.

The pursuit continued back onto the reservation and eventually turned south onto BIA Route 41. Dittman continued to operate the Jeep at excessive speeds as Officer #1 and Officer #4 pursued him.

The Jeep traveled into Nebraska, at which time OST terminated the pursuit. The Jeep came to a stop a short distance into Nebraska. Officer #1 and Officer #4 observed Dittman flee the vehicle on foot while the passengers remained with the Jeep. The passenger who sustained a gunshot wound was transported to a hospital. Dittman escaped from law enforcement and was captured on May 7 in Pine Ridge after an intensive manhunt.

DCI Agents determined that Officer #2 was the only officer to discharge his firearm.

As part of the investigation:

- DCI determined the shooting incident was captured by in-car cameras.
- DCI, OSTDPS, FBI and the Fall River County Sheriff's Office secured the scene of the officer involved shooting. Officer #2's duty-issued pistol was secured by OSTDPS until transferred to the custody of DCI.
- DCI Agents interviewed Officers #1, #3, and #4, and conducted an inventory of their weapons and ammunition. Officer #2 was interviewed on May 5.
- Officer #2 was in full police uniform and his pistol was inventoried as follows:
 - Glock 22 .40 S&W Handgun containing 13 rounds including 12 rounds in the magazine and one chambered, consistent with three rounds being fired.
 - Two Spare Magazines filled to full capacity (15 rounds).

SCENE INVESTIGATION

The shooting scene investigation was conducted by DCI Agents. The scene was located in the north ditch of U.S. Highway 18, milepost 71, at the intersection of Slim Buttes Road. Items of evidence found at the scene corroborated law enforcement officer statements.

Tire tracks were visible exiting Highway 18 and entering the ditch on the north side of the highway. Based off the tracks it appeared the Jeep was traveling from west to east when it entered the ditch. DCI Agents located three fired cartridge casings in the ditch on the north side of Highway 18. The cartridge casings were located north of the tire tracks in the ditch. All three cartridge casings were .40 caliber.

The crime scene was mapped and recorded by DCI Agents.

The vehicle driven by Dittman during the pursuit was processed by DCI Agents. The vehicle was found to have three bullet defects indicating it had been struck by three separate shots. There were three bullets recovered from various parts of the Jeep.

OFFICER INTERVIEWS

OFFICER #1

On May 2, 2025, DCI and FBI Agents conducted an interview with Officer #1. Officer #1 described his involvement and thought process during the shooting incident.

Officer #1 was working his normal patrol shift when he learned of an incident where an unknown male subject had shot a dog in Pine Ridge. During the investigation, Officers #2, #3, and #4 observed a black Jeep Grand Cherokee bearing Nebraska license plates in the area where the firearm call originated.

Officer #1 encountered the Jeep on U.S. Highway 18 near milepost 91. Officer #1 turned his marked police vehicle around to stop the Jeep, and a pursuit ensued. The Jeep swerved into incoming traffic and was traveling at speeds over 100 miles per hour.

The pursuit continued westbound on U.S. Highway 18 into Fall River County until it reached the area of milepost 66. A school bus was traveling eastbound when the Jeep swerved around the bus and reversed direction, traveling back east toward Pine Ridge. Officer #1 observed a male with a white shirt driving the vehicle, along with two additional occupants—one in the front passenger seat and one in the back.

Officer #2 informed Officer #1 that they would be placing spikes near milepost 71 on U.S. Highway 18. As they approached, Officer #1 observed two officers on the north side of U.S. Highway 18 as well as two spikes positioned across the highway. Officer #1 observed the Jeep swerve into the ditch toward the officers. Officer #1 heard loud pops and looked back to see one of the officers holstering his pistol.

Officer #1 continued to follow the Jeep until Dittman fled on foot in Nebraska.

OFFICER #2

On May 5, 2025, DCI Special Agents conducted an interview with Officer #2. Officer #2 described his involvement and thought process during the shooting incident.

On May 2, Officer #2 assisted Officer #3 and Officer #4 with the aforementioned firearm call in Pine Ridge. Officer #2 noticed the Jeep in the

area near the shooting call. Officer #2 relayed the information to Officer #1 as the Jeep left the area.

Officer #2 heard Officer #1 attempt to conduct a traffic stop of the Jeep on U.S. Highway 18 and a pursuit ensued. Officer #2 and Officer #3 responded to assist with the pursuit. As the officers responded, the Jeep turned around and traveled east on U.S. Highway 18.

Officer #2 considered the threats to public safety including school buses and commuter traffic.

Officer #2 parked his patrol vehicle on the north side of U.S. Highway 18 on an approach. Officer #2 stood in front of Officer #3 in the ditch, nearest to the highway. Officer #2 indicated his back was turned to Officer #3.

Officer #2 and #3 deployed spikes near milepost 71 on U.S. Highway 18 in an attempt to end the pursuit. The Jeep began to slow down and veered in his direction. Officer #2 dropped the cord attached to the spikes. Officer #2 could see the driver looking directly at him, as the Jeep continued toward him.

Officer #2 believed the vehicle was going to strike him and he had nowhere to escape—he believed moving in either direction would result in him getting struck by the Jeep. Officer #2 was also concerned where Officer #3 was standing and believed she could also be struck by the Jeep.

Officer #2 unholstered his pistol and fired at the Jeep, specifically aiming at the driver. Officer #2 believed he fired two rounds. Officer #2 believed using force at that time would stop the driver from striking Officer #3 or himself. Officer #2 believed that being struck by the Jeep, which Officer #2 estimated was traveling at 60 to 70 miles per hour when it passed by him, would result in his or Officer #3's death. Officer #2 indicated the distance between the Jeep and himself was so close that Officer #2 could see the wrinkles in Dittman's shirt.

OFFICER #3

On May 2, 2025, DCI Agents interviewed Officer #3. Officer #3 described her involvement and thought process during the shooting incident.

Officer #3 recounted the details leading up to the pursuit, including the sighting of Dittman's Jeep around the area of the firearm call in Pine Ridge.

Officer #3 responded to the pursuit of Dittman's vehicle, along with Officer #2. When the pursuit began to head back eastbound towards the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation on U.S. Highway 18, Officer #3 assisted Officer #2 with setting up spikes to end the pursuit.

As Dittman's vehicle approached the spikes, Officer #3 observed Dittman's Jeep veer into the ditch toward her and Officer #2. Officer #3 witnessed Officer #2 discharge his pistol toward the Jeep but was unsure how many rounds he fired. Officer #3 believed the Jeep never slowed down once it entered the ditch.

OFFICER #4

On May 2, 2025, DCI and FBI Agents interviewed Officer #4. Officer #4 described his involvement and thought process during the shooting incident.

While investigating the firearm call in Pine Ridge, Officer #4 also responded to the pursuit of Dittman. Officer #4 indicated he stopped his vehicle about 100 yards to the east of Officers #2 and #3's positions near milepost 71 on U.S. Highway 18. Officer #4 saw Dittman's Jeep traveling towards the spikes and then enter the ditch toward Officers #2 and #3. Officer #4 said the Jeep was traveling straight toward Officer #2 and #3. Officer #4 did not hear any gunshots but heard over the radio Officer #1 indicate shots had been fired.

Officer #4 indicated the Jeep continued east with Officer #1 pursuing. Officer #4 joined the pursuit until it ended in Nebraska. Officer #4 discovered one of the passengers of the Jeep had been shot in the right shoulder area. Officer #4 provided aid to the passenger until Nebraska emergency services arrived.

INTERVIEW: CODY DITTMAN

On May 7, 2025, DCI Agents interviewed Cody Dittman at the Pennington County Jail after his capture by Federal and Tribal Law Enforcement.

Dittman admitted that on May 1, 2025, he fled Nebraska after being involved in a violent domestic incident. Dittman immediately traveled to the Pine Ridge Reservation to avoid arrest by Nebraska law enforcement. While in the town of Pine Ridge, Dittman offered a ride to several strangers who asked for help fixing their car. The two individuals remained in Dittman's vehicle when OST initiated the pursuit.

Dittman indicated he was driving on the highway when the pursuit began. Dittman cut off his ankle monitor and threw it out the window as the pursuit was ongoing. Dittman continued westbound out of the Pine Ridge Reservation until he realized OST was still in pursuit. Dittman said he "maneuvered" around a school bus, which he believed to be empty, and headed back east toward the Pine Ridge Reservation.

While driving back to the Reservation, Dittman saw OST officers were positioned to set up spikes. Dittman said he slowed down to approximately 40 miles per hour and deliberately swerved into the ditch to avoid the

spikes. Dittman denied attempting to strike the officer, but advised he had no intention of being captured.

Dittman said an OST officer opened fire after he entered the ditch. Debris from the windshield struck his face and one of the passengers sustained a gunshot wound. Dittman indicated his vehicle was approximately ten feet from the officer. After the shooting incident, Dittman continued evading OST authorities until his Jeep ran out of gas, and he fled on foot.

Dittman expressed his disrespect for OST law enforcement. Dittman denied possessing any weapons at the time of the pursuit. Dittman admitted to using drugs before the pursuit began.

WITNESS INTERVIEWS

On May 2, 2025, DCI and FBI Agents interviewed both passengers of Dittman's vehicle during the OST pursuit.

The passengers shared that Dittman picked them up at a convenience store in Pine Ridge. The passengers confirmed Dittman as the driver of the Jeep during the pursuit. The passengers conveyed Dittman swerved into the ditch toward the OST officers. The passengers indicated OST officers fired into the vehicle, striking one of the passengers in the shoulder. One of the passengers indicated Dittman's ankle monitor was cut off and thrown out of the vehicle as the pursuit was ongoing. The passengers remained with the Jeep after Dittman fled on foot.

VIDEO EVIDENCE

In-car camera recordings from the responding Officer's captured the pursuit and shooting incident.

In-car camera video and audio depict Officer #1's high-speed pursuit of Dittman and the shooting incident. Multiple camera angles from Officer #1 and #2's in-car camera captured the shooting incident.

Dittman's vehicle is shown heading east until the pursuit reaches the location where Officer #2 and Officer #3 had deployed spikes. Dittman's vehicle crosses the westbound lane of Highway 18 and enters the north ditch. Officer #2 and #3 can be seen standing off the highway in the ditch.

Dittman's vehicle can be seen driving toward Officer #2 and Officer #3. Both officers back up as Officer #2 draws his duty-issued pistol. Officer #2 pointed his pistol at the vehicle, and multiple shots were fired. Three audible gunshots can be heard in Officer #1's video. Dittman's vehicle then veered east, where he continued over an approach. Dittman reentered the highway and continued eastbound on Highway 18.

FORENSIC EXAMINATION

The South Dakota Forensic Laboratory (SDFL) tested the three fired cartridge casings found on the scene. The SDFL concluded the cartridge casings matched Officer #2's duty-issued pistol.

MEDICAL REPORTS AND CRIMINAL HISTORY

A drug screen and blood alcohol tests were conducted on Officer #2. The results were negative for the presence of drugs and alcohol.

A criminal background check of Dittman showed a history of criminal offenses to include assault, theft, and drug offenses. Dittman is currently on parole in Nebraska.

INVESTIGATION RESULTS

Based on the totality of the circumstances, the OST Officer present at the scene utilized lethal force in a situation that was tense, uncertain, and rapidly evolving. Officers were in pursuit of Cody Dittman, a parole absconder from the state of Nebraska, with a violent criminal history.

Dittman drove in the direction of OST Officers #2 and #3, nearly striking Officer #2 as he fired at Dittman. Dittman presented a clear danger to officers attempting to apprehend him. Dittman operated his Jeep Grand Cherokee at a rate of speed that would have resulted in death or serious injury had either one of the officers been struck.

This information is based on the investigation conducted by the DCI, crime scene processing, law enforcement officers' statements, video review, and lab results. The evidence collected presents a clear picture that is consistent with Officer #2's belief that his decision to use lethal force coincided with the significant chance of death or serious injury to him or others.

It is the conclusion of this report and the South Dakota Attorney General that OST Officer #2 was justified in firing his duty-issued pistol and using lethal force.

PHOTOGRAPHS



Photograph from dashboard camera of a police vehicle depicting the moment prior to Officer #2 firing his duty weapon



Photograph from dashboard camera of a police vehicle depicting suspect vehicle maneuvering around a school bus