

Suspect in Moscow shooting spree faces an extradition hearing Friday

John Lee is accused of killing three people, wounding one

Elizabeth Rudd/Lewiston Tribune

COLFAX - The alleged perpetrator in a shooting spree Jan. 10 in Moscow will be in court Friday to learn if he'll be returned to Idaho to face multiple murder charges.

John Lee, 29, of Moscow, is scheduled to appear at 10:30 a.m. Friday in Whitman County Superior Court before Judge David Frazier for a review hearing on his extradition to Latah County. He is charged with three counts of first-degree murder and one count of attempted murder. A warrant for Lee's return to Idaho signed by Washington Gov. Jay Inslee was filed Tuesday.

The charges levied against Lee stem from a series of shootings in Moscow that left three people dead and a fourth critically injured. Lee is accused of killing Moscow residents David M. Trail, 76, Belinda G. Niebuhr, 47, and his adoptive mother, Terri L. Grzebielski, 61, and injuring Seattle resident Michael M.M. Chin, 39, before fleeing to Whitman County.

Lee was informed of the charges filed against him in Latah County during a hearing in January. He declined at that time to waive extradition, requiring Idaho Gov. C.L. (Butch) Otter to request his return to Latah County from Inslee. The letter from Inslee, dated Feb. 11, commands Lee to be delivered to Latah County Sheriff Wayne Rausch, or a designated officer, for return to Idaho.

Inslee's warrant for extradition indicates sufficient documentation was provided to him in Otter's request, which included an application from Latah County Prosecutor William Thompson Jr.

Lee is also facing a felony eluding charge in Whitman County for leading police on a high-speed chase along U.S. Highway 195 following the reported shootings. He is scheduled for a readiness hearing in that case at 10 a.m. Friday.

He has pleaded innocent to the eluding charge and is being represented by Pullman attorney Steve Martonick. A trial is scheduled for 9 a.m. March 16. If convicted, Lee faces a maximum penalty of five years in prison and a \$10,000 fine.

Whitman County Prosecutor Denis Tracy has indicated he intends to resolve Lee's case in Washington prior to returning him to Idaho, unless Latah County authorities request that he drop it. Tracy intends to have Lee extradited to Idaho before serving a sentence in Washington if he is convicted of the eluding charge.

Lee is being held at the Whitman County Jail without bond on a warrant from Latah County, as well as a \$500,000 bond for the eluding case.

