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NEWS RELEASE

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GUILTY VERDICT IN '97 COLD CASE

A man accused in a brutal 1997 attempted murder, kidnapping and sexual assault of a teenage girl has been found guilty by a Denver jury today. The conviction is the result of work by Denver's Cold Case Project and prosecutors Chief Deputy DA Dawn Weber and Deputy DA Kelly Waidler.

Ray Ojeda (04-09-71) was found guilty of *attempted first-degree murder* (F2), *second-degree kidnapping* (F2) and *first-degree sexual assault* (F2).

On June 14, 1997, a 15-year-old girl was walking home near Federal Boulevard and Holden Place when Ojeda kidnapped her at gunpoint and took her to a secluded area near the South Platte River at 64th Avenue and York Street. Ojeda sexually assaulted her, then shot her in the head and threw her in the river. She was able to walk a half-mile to I-270 and flag down a passerby for help.

The case remained unsolved. Then in 2011, Ojeda was convicted of a felony marijuana charge in Texas, and his DNA was submitted to the CODIS database. His DNA came back as a match to the DNA taken from the victim in the original sex assault examination. The match not only led to the arrest and conviction of Ojeda, but also exonerated two men who had been identified earlier as possible suspects in the case.

Ojeda is scheduled to be sentenced in June and will face up to 144 years in prison.