



## **Lowell Responds to Inquiries About Sexual Exploitation of Children Case**

*August 16, 2018*



**Colton Levi Minard**

**Sweetwater County Sheriff Mike Lowell responded Thursday morning to inquiries his office received concerning the Colton Levi Minard case.**

**Minard, 19, of Green River, was recently sentenced to prison for Sexual Exploitation of Children.**

**“The case began with Detective Matt Wharton’s investigation of a reported instance of child abuse,” Lowell said. “That investigation led him to Minard.**

**It was learned - and information obtained through search warrants issued for his Facebook account and later for his cell phone confirmed - that Minard was engaged in contacting numerous underage girls as young as 12 and encouraging them to sneak out and meet him for sex. Sexually explicit photographs and texts were also exchanged.”**

**“Ultimately, Minard pleaded guilty to a single count of Sexual Exploitation of Children, for which he was sentenced on August 9. Additional charges - another count of Sexual Exploitation of Children and a charge of Promoting Obscenity - were dismissed.”**

**“Sexual predators stalking their victims online is a serious problem**

**nationwide. In 1995 the FBI created its Innocent Images National Initiative (IINI), whose mission is to prevent sexual predators from using the Internet to lure children from their families, rescue victims, and break up networks of online pedophiles. Since its inception, IINI has opened over 10,000 cases and helped secure just under 3,000 convictions.”**

**“In the Minard case, our detectives discovered a dangerous sexual predator, went after him, and took him out of circulation,” Lowell said. “They did a great job.”**