Barefoot Bandit Settles into Stafford Creek Corrections Center

Local News

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ABERDEEN, Wash. - The youthful thief known as the "Barefoot Bandit," who led police on a two-year crime spree in stolen boats, cars and planes, has been moved out of solitary confinement and into the general inmate population at another prison in Washington state, corrections officials confirmed Thursday.Colton Harris-Moore, 21, had spent three weeks in "intensive management," most of which was at the Walla Walla State Penitentiary alongside inmates facing the death penalty. It was for his own protection as a high-profile convict, said Washington Department of Corrections spokesman Chad Lewis.Somebody might want to make a name for himself by saying, `I took down the Barefoot Bandit,' - LewisHarris-Moore had been in solitary confinement at Walla Walla since he arrived April 11, and he was allowed out of his cell five times per week, for an hour each time. A department spokeswoman said last month he was expected to remain in solitary confinement for as long as eight weeks while officials determined his long-term placement.His lawyer, John Henry Browne, objected to that over concerns about his mental health.

He said Harris-Moore neither needed nor wanted the protection of solitary confinement and that it was absurd his client, never convicted of a violent crime, was being kept in conditions akin to those of the worst murderers.On Monday, Harris-Moore was transferred across the state to Stafford Creek Corrections Center in Aberdeen. He was placed Wednesday in a medium-security unit with about 250 other offenders.Browne credited an Associated Press story about Harris-Moore's detention with speeding up the department's decision to move him."I'm very happy to tell you Colton is at Stafford Creek," Browne said. "We spoke with his counselor. He's already set up in a GED program." Harris-Moore was sentenced in December to seven years in state prison for dozens of crimes, including burglary and identity theft, stemming from his sensational two-year run from the law.A self-taught pilot, he was apprehended in a hail of bullets in the Bahamas in 2010, after he crash-landed a plane stolen from an Indiana airport.Harris-Moore sold the movie rights to his story in hopes of raising enough money to pay $1.3 million in restitution to his victims. Academy Award winner Dustin Lance Black -- who wrote the screenplays for "Milk" and the recent "J. Edgar" -- has met with Harris-Moore several times and has turned in a draft of the script.Browne is also representing Staff Sgt. Robert Bales, who is accused of killing 17 Afghan villagers in March.