



# Siskiyou County Sheriff's Office

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## News Release

For Immediate Release:

### **SISKIYOU COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE NEWS UPDATE**

**April 15, 2017**

### **Sheriff's Office Searching for Suspected Dead Body in Klamath River**

#### **Unknown if Search is Linked to Missing Happy Camp Man**

On Friday, April 14, 2017, at about 6:34 p.m. the Siskiyou County Sheriff's Office (SCSO) received a citizen's report of a possible dead body floating in Indian Creek in the Happy Camp area. A SCSO deputy arrived at the 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue Bridge and observed what appeared to be the body of a heavy-set male adult floating in the river in swift-moving water. The body was then observed at SR 96 and was last seen in vicinity of the Klamath River at the Indian Creek River Access point. A search by SCSO and California Highway Patrol (CHP) units failed to locate the body as it entered the Klamath River access point. The Klamath River and other tributaries have been flowing rapidly and are muddy due to recent snow run-off and intermittent rains and water levels are very high.

On Saturday, April 15, 2017, in the early morning hours, a search by SCSO field and specialized units was initiated in the Klamath River area at a point where the body was last seen. A fixed-wing aircraft from the CHP's Northern Division conducted an aerial search of the area with negative results. The SCSO's Search and Rescue (SAR) team, SCSO Water Safety Unit, SCSO Dive Team, and other SCSO personnel responded and supported the search effort. As of 7:00 p.m. on Saturday (April 15), search teams have detected no sign of the body. A SCSO boat crew and SAR leader searched an area several miles downstream from the Happy Camp area with negative results. Search conditions have been hazardous, the water levels remain high, and the water is moving swiftly along the Klamath River. Muddy water is also adversely affecting search efforts.

Shortly after the search for the suspected dead body was initiated, relatives of a Happy Camp man reported him missing. At this time, it is unknown for certain if he is the man observed in the water by citizens and law enforcement personnel. Mr. Benjamin Arthur Camarena, 42, of Happy Camp, was last seen riding his horse on Indian Creek Road in the Happy Camp area at about the time the body in the river was reported. The horse reportedly returned without the rider, reported to be Mr. Camarena.

According to Sheriff Jon Lopey, "There has been an extensive search conducted by our personnel and allied agencies from the local area under difficult and hazardous conditions. We will do all we can to find the body suspected to be deceased in the Klamath River. The CHP has been very helpful and we will

request additional aircraft on Sunday if the search does not end successfully on Saturday. A CHP helicopter may be available on Sunday, which could help us recover the body suspected to be still in the Klamath River. It is too early to determine if the suspected dead body is that of the missing man, Mr. Camarena, and we are doing all we can to investigate his disappearance. We allocated additional field and investigative resources to the Happy Camp area as well to investigate his disappearance and find out if people who saw him or associated with him prior to his disappearance can shed any light on his actions prior to his disappearance. Anyone with any information about the suspected dead body or anyone with information about Mr. Camarena's whereabouts or his activities prior to his disappearance is urged to contact the SCSO's 24-hour Dispatch Center at (530) 841-2900."