



GRAHAM COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

600 W. GRAHAM CANAL RD. · SAFFORD, ARIZONA 85546 · TELEPHONE (928) 428-3141 · FAX (928) 792-5251

SHERIFF
PRESTON "P.J." ALLRED

UNDERSHERIFF
C. JEFF McCORMIES

News Release

Death Investigation (Drowning)

On June 13, 2021, at approximately 2:39 PM Graham County Communications received a call of a possible drowning at Roper Lake. The report was the victim had gone under the water and had not re-surfaced. The victim, later identified as a 16-year-old male visiting from out of state, was still under the water when Deputies arrived in the area at 2:45 PM. There were juveniles already in the water still looking for the victim who never re-surfaced after 911 was called.

The incident is still under investigation by the Graham County Sheriff's Office, but at this time what is known is the victim was with a group of other juveniles who had gone to Roper to swim. The victim and others were swimming from the Island to the north fishing dock. According to one witness the victim said he was going to go back to the Island because he was struggling. At one point a female who was behind the group saw the victim struggling and yelled for someone to call 911. The victim went under the water and not re-surfaced as law enforcement and rescue personnel began to arrive.

Search and Rescue members from Graham and Cochise County were later called to assist in the victim recovery. Members from the Cochise County Search and Rescue Drive Team went into the water in the evening of June 13 and due to lighting conditions had to suspend the search. The search was resumed on June 14, in the early morning hours, and the victim was located at approximately 7:15 AM. The victim was found over 200 feet from the north fishing dock.

The next of kin, who live out of State, were notified of the incident on June 13. An autopsy is scheduled for Wednesday, June 16 to be conducted by the Pima County Medical Examiner's Office.

The Graham County Sheriff's Office along with all first responders express their deepest sympathy to the family of the victim.