

Stanislaus County **SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT**

Sheriff Adam Christianson
250 E. Hackett Road, Modesto, CA 95358



MEDIA RELATIONS



**NEWS RELEASE
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

DATE 3-24-10
TIME 12:00 PM

MISSING PERSON FEARED DROWNED

Grayson, CA – A missing person is feared to have drowned in the San Joaquin River late Monday afternoon (3-22-10). Mike Gouker, 46, of Modesto was fishing with a friend, Jeffery Bargas, 27, on the San Joaquin River in the area of West Grayson Road and River Road. Gouker entered the river to retrieve a snagged fishing line when Bargas heard Gouker shout for help. Bargas looked to see Gouker being swept away by the river's swift current.

Bargas did not have a cell phone and chosen to drive to his residence in Modesto to report the incident to authorities via telephone. Bargas called 911 to report the incident at 4:23 PM from his West Modesto home. Officials believe a significant amount of time elapsed between the last time Gouker was seen and when authorities were notified.

Stanislaus Sheriff's deputies, CHP, Stanislaus Consolidated Fire and Fish and Game were involved in an extensive search of the area, which included foot, boat and helicopter patrols. The search was terminated after several hours without success.

Gouker is described as a Caucasian male adult with brown hair, blue eyes and was wearing dark clothing. Gouker was last seen struggling to swim as the current swept him in a northern direction.

Gouker has been entered into the National Missing/Unidentified Persons computer database as a missing person.

Anyone with information about this case is encouraged to contact Detective Jon McQueary at (209) 525-7099. Callers can also leave an anonymous tip by calling Crime Stoppers at (209) 521-4636. Tipsters can also e-mail tips at <http://www.modestopolice.com/CrimeStoppers>, or text them to CRIMES (274637) by typing "Tip704" plus the message. Tipsters are eligible for cash rewards.

For information regarding this press release please contact Deputy Andrew Winter (209) 652-0300, (awinter@stanislaussheriff.com).

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