

Stanislaus County **SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT**

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



MEDIA RELATIONS



**NEWS RELEASE
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**DATE July 17, 2008
TIME 6:00 PM**

SEVENTH VICTIM RECOVERED FROM DELTA MENDOTA CANAL

PATTERSON, CA- For the third straight day, a victim has been recovered from the Delta Mendota canal. The victim has been identified as Lucas Martinez 19, from Lodi. Martinez was the last of six people who were killed when the Ford Explorer he was riding in collided with a septic truck and plunged into the canal on Tuesday afternoon.

In all, seven people were killed in the collision, which caused both vehicles to fall into the canal. On Tuesday, Sheriff's divers located the two vehicles at the bottom of the canal. The driver of the septic truck was still inside the cab when the truck was pulled from the canal. The Ford Explorer, which initially had six people inside, was recovered later that evening. When the Explorer was pulled from the canal, there were only four victims inside.

On Wednesday afternoon a CHP officer spotted the body of Adriana Garcia in the canal, several miles from where the initial crash had occurred. Garcia was removed from the canal and identified by family members.

Shortly after 2:00 PM on Thursday afternoon, dispatch received a call from a citizen that there was a body floating in the Delta Mendota canal approximately two bridges South of Needham Road, where the initial collision had occurred on Tuesday.

A Sheriff's detective and deputy, both of whom are assigned to Patterson, arrived and followed the victim along the canal for approximately a mile and a half. Patterson Firefighters arrived and were able to stop the victim's body with a rope about one mile North of Rogers Road. Detective David Hickman and Deputy Matthew Wagner pulled Martinez from the canal.

The Coroner arrived and transported Martinez to the coroner's facility where family members made positive identification.

For information regarding this press release please contact Deputy Tom Letras (209) 652-0134.