



**National Park Service**  
**U.S. Department of the Interior**

Sequoia and Kings Canyon  
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## Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Parks News Release

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### For Immediate Release

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### Drowning in Kaweah River, Sequoia National Park

A 13-year-old girl from Tulare drowned on Saturday afternoon, July 18, during a family outing to Sequoia National Park.

The girl and her family were at the Hospital Rock area in the foothills of the park. She was swimming in the Middle Fork of the Kaweah River with other family members when she got caught in the current, swept into a stretch of rapids, and became trapped under a large rock.

Park Dispatch was notified of a possible drowning at 3:03 p.m. Park rangers responded immediately and started intensive rescue efforts. These were continued for a full hour. The effort to retrieve the victim was complex and dangerous; it was completed at 5:30 p.m.

A Tulare County Sheriff's deputy assisted on scene. The county's Swiftwater/Dive Team was also contacted for assistance, but the victim was recovered before they could arrive.

"Once the high water of spring has passed, the river can appear deceptively calm," said Ranger David Fireman, who headed the rescue efforts. "However, there are still strong currents. Between that and the rocky riverbed, the river remains dangerous all year."

This is the first drowning in Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Parks this year, although there have been several close calls. Drowning is the number-one cause of death in these and other national parks.

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