



Hernando County Sheriff's Office

A STATE ACCREDITED LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCY

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Media Release

From: Sergeant Donna Black
Public Information Officer, 352-754-6830

Re: Unexplained Death- Chassahowitzka Management Area-Update

Date: September 13, 2010

Case#: 2010-34527

The autopsy was conducted by the Medical Examiners Office on Sunday. Preliminary results revealed that there were no signs of foul play or obvious reasons of how the subject died. The full autopsy is pending while awaiting the toxicology.

The deceased was picking Saw Palmetto berries by himself and there are many hazards such as rattle snakes that live in the Palmettos, large wasps nests, yellow jacket that come out of the ground in swarms when disturbed and extreme summer heat.

Currently, we do not know the identity of the deceased. Two of the berry picking crew members who stay gave a possible name but it has not been confirmed. Our agency is working with the Immokalee Coalition for Migrant Worker in Collier County in hopes of identifying the deceased.

Released on September 11, 2010

At approximately 7:00 pm today Hernando County Deputies were notified by a crew of Hispanic Palmetto berry pickers that one of their crew members had not returned to their truck yesterday evening as scheduled. The crew were picking in the area of Chassahowitzka Management Area, west of US 19 not far from the Citrus County line. The Hispanic berry picking crew is from the Immokalee Florida area.

Hernando County Deputies along with FWC started a search with the assistance from the helicopter and ATV's did locate the missing crew member's body around 10:00 pm tonight. The deceased was located in a Palmetto bush/wooded area; approximately ½ miles down a dirt road, west of US 19 and north of Centralia.

Major Crime Unit and the medical examiners office have been notified.

If you have information regarding this crime, please contact the Hernando County Sheriff's Office at 352-754-6830. If you wish to remain anonymous, call the Hernando County Crime Stoppers Hot line at 352-797-TIPS (8477) or you may email your tip by clicking below.

<http://www.hernandosheriff.org/Tips/>

You may be eligible for a reward up to \$1,000.