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Two teens drown in Cedar River

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MOUNT VERNON, Iowa — Two teenage boys, who authorities believe drowned while wading in the Cedar River at Palisades-Kepler State Park in eastern Iowa, have been identified.

Merwin L. Schlabaugh, 16, and Norman J. Kauffman, 19, both of Kalona, disappeared into the river just before 3:30 p.m. Sunday, said Capt. Rik Haendler of the Linn County Sheriff's Department.

Rescue personnel were called to the scene, just west of Mount Vernon. They recovered the bodies after about an hour later in nine feet of water.

Boaters tried to help Schlabaugh and Kauffman, Haendler said.

"The water is extremely swift out there," he said. "There just wasn't enough time to get to them."

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