



Accident Database

Report ID# 3306

Help

2010-04-07

Date

Mark Grand

Victim

51

Victim Age

Shenandoah, N. Fork (Riverside Church (Route 921) to Shenandoah Caverns

River

Riverside Church (Route 921) to Shenandoah Caverns (Route 730)

Section

Riverton Dam United States Virginia, US

Location

Gage

Water Level

N/A

River Difficulty

Caught in a Natural Hydraulic

Cause

Cause Code(s)

– Caught in Low Head Dam Hydraulic

Injury Type(s)

– Does not Apply

Factors

– Other

Private

Trip Type

Open Canoe

Boat Type

Group Info

Other Victim Names

Reported

Status

Accident Description

Re: Low-head dam incident in VA

Posted by: "Tom"

Mon Apr 12, 2010 9:52 am (PDT)

I was on the rescue call. From witness accounts he put in at a boat landing just downstream from the dam. For an unknown reason he paddled upstream into the hydraulic and got dumped from the kayak. He had a PFD, I don't know about a helmet. He was flushed from the hydraulic and brought to shore.

We used a boat tether to retrieve the kayak from the hydraulic for Game & Inland Fisheries' investigation. To qualify this I was on the second arriving team so we got there later in the incident.

Another article had a history of the victim he was a Army Special Forces Captain with 4 tours in Iraq and a Bronze Star. His family said he was a risk taker by nature and inexperienced kayaker.

<http://www.nvdaily.com/news/2010/04/man-in-kayak-killed-at-riverton-dam.php>

Man in kayak killed at Riverton Dam

Crews find Linden resident 'pulseless' after being caught in hydraulics

Northern Virginia Daily News April 8, 2010

By M.K. Luther - mkluther@nvdaily.com

FRONT ROYAL -- A Linden man died on Wednesday after a kayaking accident at the Riverton Dam on the North Fork of the Shenandoah River. Mark Grand, 51, of Linden was pronounced dead at Warren Memorial Hospital, according to Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries spokeswoman Julia Dixon. Grand, who was kayaking with a companion, approached the dam and became caught in the hydraulics -- the churn or whirlpool created at the base of the dam, Dixon said. "The force of the water can hold someone underwater," Dixon said.

Dixon said a 911 call was made to emergency dispatch at 2:10 p.m. Crews from the Front Royal Volunteer Fire Department, Warren County Fire and Rescue Services and Linden Volunteer Fire Department responded to the scene "within minutes" and

launched a rescue boat, according to Capt. Raymond Cross of Warren County Fire and Rescue Services. Grand was "unresponsive and pulseless" when rescue crews pulled him from the river, Cross said.

Cross said that according to reports, Grand had entered the river at the Riverton public boat landing to kayak and "paddled up to the dam and got sucked through the hydraulic." Grand was "able to exit the kayak but not the hydraulic," Cross said. Rescue crews retrieved Grand from the water and he was taken to "a waiting medic," Cross said. Crews performed CPR and transported him to Warren Memorial Hospital.

The Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries has jurisdiction over all boating accidents in the state, Dixon said. However, she did not have information on previous incidents at the Riverton Dam immediately available. In 2002, Warren County resident Thomas William Walker's boat overturned while on a fishing trip on the North Fork. Walker had been fishing near the dam with his two sons and one of the sons' friends when the boat came too close to the dam and overturned, according to the Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries. Walker's body was later found and recovered from under approximately 6 feet of water, 250 feet from the dam by Warren County rescue crews.

The more than 100-year-old, town-owned dam has been out of service since 1930, and could be slated for demolition as early as September. The Front Royal Town Council voted unanimously in March to accept a U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service grant to help fund the demolition work. The council had already approved an ordinance in December to declare the dam a no-trespassing zone, making it an offense to walk on or use the dam. "No trespassing" signs are posted on and around the surrounding property.

Grand is the second person to die on the river in the past eight days. On March 30, Jessica Lynn Barr, 21, of Stephens City died after her car was swept from a single-lane, low-water bridge on Morgan Ford Road into the Shenandoah River. Cross said this kayaking incident underscores the crucial importance of staying away from river dams in all situations. "Low-head dams are often called drowning machines," Cross said.

*Linden man dies in kayaking accident at Riverton Dam

By M.K. Luther

mkluther@nvdaily.mkl Northern Virginia Daily News

FRONT ROYAL -- Mark Grand, 51, of Linden was pronounced dead at Warren Memorial Hospital, according to Julia Dixon, spokeswoman with Department of Game and Inland Fisheries. Dixon did not have the exact time of death and the official cause of death will be released by the chief medical examiner's office, she said.

Grand was kayaking with a companion and approached the dam and became caught in the hydraulics -- the churn or whirlpool created at the base of the dam. "The force of the water can hold someone under water, " Dixon said.

The Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries has jurisdiction over all boating accidents in the state, Dixon said.

The man was unresponsive and pulseless when rescue crews pulled him from the river and CPR was being administered, said Capt. Raymond Cross of Warren County Fire and Rescue Services.

According to the man's girlfriend, he had entered the river to kayak and "paddled up to the dam and got sucked through the hydraulic," Cross said. He was "able to exit the kayak but not the hydraulic," Cross said.

Front Royal Volunteer Fire Department, Warren County Fire and Rescue and Linden Volunteer Fire Department crews responded to the scene and launched a rescue boat, Cross said.

Crews retrieved the man from the water and he was taken to "a waiting medic," Cross said and taken to Warren Memorial.

Cross said the incident underscores the importance of staying away from dams in all situations.





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