

Yadkin River Between Wilkesboros Searched After Drowning Reported



UPDATE: Wilkesboro Fire Chief Jason Smithey said the search for an apparent drowning victim in the Yadkin River between the Wilkesboros was suspended shortly after dark Tuesday and was scheduled to resume at 9 a.m. Wednesday with assistance of a dive team from Alexander County.

At about 7:30 p.m. Tuesday, emergency personnel in small-motorized boats were still searching a stretch of the Yadkin River between the Wilkesboros as a result of a report of a man entering the river to intentionally drown.

The North Wilkesboro Fire Department, North Wilkesboro Police, Wilkes Emergency Medical Services and Wilkes

Rescue Squad were dispatched about 5:10 p.m. Tuesday after the report was made to the Wilkes Communications Center.

The Wilkesboro Fire Department, which has personnel trained in swift water rescue, was also dispatched. Members of the Champion Fire Department with swift water rescue training were also on the scene.

Police said the man who reported the incident told them that he and his friend had been drinking alcohol bought at the ABC store for about 30 minutes while sitting near the Yadkin when his friend, who was distraught, indicated that he didn't wish to live and entered the river.

The man said he tried but wasn't able to stop his friend from entering the river and then saw his head go under water as he went downstream. Police said articles of clothing were found near where it appeared someone might have slid down the riverbank into the water.

The man said his friend was from Purlear but his name wasn't immediately available.

A dispatcher with the Wilkes Communications Center said a diving specialist from Alexander County was expected to arrive to assist with the search.

The search is concentrated on the Yadkin from behind the ABC store to Smoot Park