

Unattended Vessel Investigation Ends in Recovery of Deceased Boater

By Linda Sutter July 23, 2026



CRESCENT CITY, Calif. — A report of an unattended vessel circling in the ocean west of Battery Point Lighthouse on Thursday morning led to a coordinated search by the Del Norte County Sheriff's Office and the U.S. Coast Guard, ending in the recovery of a deceased boater.

On July 16, 2026, at approximately 11:20 a.m., Del Norte County Dispatch received a report of a small aluminum vessel operating in circles with no one visible aboard.

Deputy Tyler Balch and Undersheriff Perry responded aboard the Sheriff's Office patrol boat while the U.S. Coast Guard was notified and dispatched additional resources.

Upon arriving on scene, deputies located the 10- to 12-foot aluminum vessel and immediately began searching the surrounding waters.

The search expanded with assistance from a Coast Guard helicopter and Coast Guard response vessel.

During the search, the Coast Guard helicopter located an unresponsive 63-year-old male in the water.

The Coast Guard vessel recovered the individual and transported him to the Crescent City Harbor, where he was pronounced deceased.

The incident remains under investigation.

