

Missing boater believed to be 59-year-old Ricky Veenstra



Kat Russell

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Emergency personnel search the Cedar River below the dam at Palisades-Kepler State Park for a man who witnesses said jumped off his rocking fishing boat after the boat got into the turbulent water below the dam at the park west of Mount Vernon, Iowa, on Sunday, July 7, 2019. The Mount Vernon Fire Department, Iowa DNR, the Lisbon Fire Department and the Linn County Sheriff's Office were observed at the scene. (Jim Slosiarek/The Gazette)

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CEDAR RAPIDS - The boater who went missing Sunday at Palisades-Kepler State Park near Mount Vernon is believed to be Ricky Lee Veenstra, 59, of Cedar Rapids, the Linn County Sheriff's Office said Monday.

The sheriff's office said witnesses reported Veenstra went into the Cedar River from a boat just below the spillway and did not resurface.

It is not clear whether Veenstra fell or jumped into the water.

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Witnesses told officials they saw the man jump from his rocking fishing boat into the turbulent water below the dam Sunday morning. However, information from the sheriff's office indicates the man fell from the boat.

The sheriff's office and the Iowa Department of Natural Resources are continuing to search the area where Veenstra was last seen, but the 'fast-moving water in that area is making the search very difficult,' the sheriff's office said.

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