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MARYLAND NEWS

Missing Swimmer's Body Found At Dangerous Md. Dam



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ELLICOTT CITY, Md. (WJZ) -- A search and rescue mission ends in death at the Patapsco River State Park where a swimmer was reported missing after going into the dam, never to be seen again.

Rochelle Ritchie has that story and why officials want the dam shut down.

Hundreds of people are drawn to the Boelde Dam every year and sometimes it turns into a fatal attraction.

After more than 12 hours of searching, divers with the Baltimore County Fire Department recovered the lifeless body of 33-year-old Arturo Alero.

"He was found in the hydraulics about midway from either shore, right in the middle," said Joe Offer, Maryland Natural Resources.



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Sunday evening, Alero was taking a swim in the Boelde Dam with two other friends when things took a turn for the worse. Officials with the Department of Natural Resources say the man reportedly swam underneath the falls and may have gotten caught in the violently spinning current of the water.

"If you get caught in that, you can't get out. There is just too much water for you to overcome, even if you're a strong swimmer," said Offer.

Those hoping to visit the dam were turned away and stunned anyone would even go near the treacherous water.



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any time you lose a life," said Chris Augsburg, park

dam altogether to save not only lives but the

"In order to bring the river back to its natural state, these man-made structures are being studied for removal," said Major Darryl Anthony, DNR Regional Manager.

While the cascading falls are beautiful to look at, the cost of human lives is just too high a price to pay and too often, warning signs are ignored.

"We just don't have the manpower to be everywhere at one time. We rely on the public to police themselves," said Anthony.

Alero's body was found pinned under the water.

Officials say in the last 30 years, at least five deaths have occurred at the dam.

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