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FWC investigates fatal hunting accident of Cedar Key man

By Jeff M. Hardison Updated Nov. 26, 2016 at 8:17 a.m.

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TALLAHASSEE – The Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission's Law Enforcement Division is investigating the first fatal shooting accident of a hunter in Florida in 2016, according to records from the FWC's Division of Law Enforcement.

Jacob B. Solano (Sept. 2, 1998 - Nov. 23, 2016), of Cedar Key, who turned 18 a couple of months before his death, died while hunting hogs on Richards Island, which is commonly known as Black Point -- off of Cedar Key, according to information in a report by FWC Inv. Darral Thomason.

That island is accessible only by boat.

On Wednesday (Nov 23) at approximately 7:30 a.m., the Levy County Sheriff Office received a call stating that an individual was shot on Richards Island, Black Point in Cedar Key, while hunting hogs, the FWC reported.

Solano and several friends were camping on the island, according to the FWC report.

A witness said that one of the campers heard some hogs in the woods the same morning. Solano and the camper took a shotgun to find the hog and kill it, the FWC said.

The camper who went with Solano reported that while looking for the hog, the FWC said, the victim became entangled in the brush and the gun discharged.

Solano suffered a fatal single gunshot wound to the chest, the FWC said.

The 24-hour report for the hunting fatality is the only record that is available at this time because this is an ongoing investigation, according to FWC Law Enforcement Division Public Information Coordinator Rob Klepper of Tallahassee.

Further details at this time are unavailable for release, Klepper noted in an email on Monday (Nov. 28) at 11:45 a.m.

“This is such a tragic loss of life and the fact that the victim was so young is especially heartbreaking. Our prayers are with Jacob’s family and friends during this time,” said Maj. Andy Krause, FWC regional commander.

FWC investigators are specially trained to investigate hunting incidents, and will be performing a complete and thorough examination of the incident.

No prior hunting incident fatalities have been reported in 2016, Klepper said in response to that question.

The FWC is the lead investigative agency. At the time immediately after the initial call to report the accident, responders included a detective from the Levy County Sheriff's Office, as well as an examiner from the Eighth Judicial Circuit Medical Examiner's Office and Cedar Key Police Chief Virgil Sandlin, according to the FWC report about the fatal hunting accident.