



ACTIVITY: Surfing

CASE: [GSAF 2014.12.28.b](#)

DATE: Sunday December 28, 2014

LOCATION: The incident took place in the Pacific Ocean at the Sand Spit Beach in Montaña de Oro State Park, San Luis Obispo County, California, USA.

NAME: Kevin Swanson

DESCRIPTION: He is a 50-year-old male from Morro Bay.

BACKGROUND

WEATHER: At 10h51, San Luis Obispo recorded air temperature of 55°F, sea level pressure 29.97 inches and wind direction was N at 0 mph. By 11h51, the air temperature was 57°F, sea level pressure was 29.94 inches and wind direction remained unchanged.

MOON PHASE: First Quarter, 55% of the Moon was illuminated.

SEA CONDITIONS: The sea was clear and the sea surface temperature was 48°F. Mean low tide occurred at 10h53.

ENVIRONMENT: Jagged reef

TIME: 11h30

NARRATIVE: About 12 other surfers were in the water when the incident took place. Andrew Walsh, who was surfing with Swanson, said the shark swam from beneath Swanson's board and dragged him under with no warning. "It was really radical," he said. "I was about 10 feet from him, and it was absolutely quiet. ... (The shark) came straight up out of the depths and got him and took him under the water. That was the amazing part: this big giant side of the shark just curving up out of the water." Walsh said Swanson was below the water for several seconds before he surfaced on his board, yelled "shark attack" and began paddling for shore.

INJURY: The surfer was bitten on the hip, and his surfboard sustained damage.

FIRST AID / TREATMENT: "We're really blessed that he was still able to get himself to shore," Walsh said. "I was a few feet behind him, and we grabbed him and got him out of the water, obviously, up on the sand." Swanson used the leash cord from his surfboard to

fashion a tourniquet for his leg where the shark bit him, Walsh said. Two doctors who had been walking on the beach helped Swanson, as well, and determined that no major arteries had been hit, Walsh said.

Several local agencies responded to the 911 call, State Park Ranger Supervisor Robert Colligan said, including the Cayucos Fire Department, Cal Fire, the San Luis Obispo County Sheriff's Office, the Coast Guard and State Parks. After being treated on scene, the patient was taken by air ambulance (helicopter) to Sierra Vista Regional Medical Center in San Luis Obispo with non-life-threatening injuries. He was released from the hospital the following day (Monday, December 29, 2014).

Authorities did not close the beach. Instead, as the county's coastal incident management plan, State Parks posted notifications throughout the beach informing visitors of the attack. Such notifications remain in place for five days, unless another shark sighting occurs, at which point the signs stay up for an additional five days, Colligan said.

SPECIES: An 8 to 10 foot shark, said to be a juvenile white shark.

CASE INVESTIGATOR: Ralph Collier



Andrew Walsh shows the damage to Kevin Swanson's surfboard



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Andrew Walsh shows the damage to Kevin Swanson's surfboard

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