

09-19-2004 Los Indios TX Jeremy Wilson-Travis Attaway – LEO Border Patrol- Boat Accident Dam



## OFFICER DOWN MEMORIAL PAGE

REMEMBERING ALL OF LAW ENFORCEMENT'S HEROES

<http://www.odmp.org/officer/17453-senior-patrol-agent-jeremy-michael-wilson>



Bio & Incident Details
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<b>Age:</b> 29
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<b>Tour:</b> 7 years
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<b>Badge #</b> 7259
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<b>Cause:</b> Drowned
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<b>Location:</b> Texas
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**Senior Patrol Agent  
Jeremy Michael Wilson**

United States Department of Homeland Security - Customs and Border Protection -  
United States Border Patrol, U.S. Government

**End of Watch: Sunday, September 19, 2004**



Bio & Incident Details
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<b>Age:</b> 31
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<b>Tour:</b> 7 years
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<b>Badge #</b> 7260
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<b>Cause:</b> Drowned
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<b>Location:</b> Texas
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**Senior Patrol Agent  
Travis Wayne Attaway**

United States Department of Homeland Security - Customs and Border Protection -  
United States Border Patrol, U.S. Government

**End of Watch: Sunday, September 19, 2004**

Senior Agents Jeremy Wilson and Travis Attaway drowned after their patrol boat capsized in the Rio Grande River near the Free Trade Bridge at Los Indios, Texas.

Agents Attaway and Wilson, along with a third agent, were conducting a routine patrol of the river when the 19-foot Predator patrol boat encountered turbulent water and capsized. The Rio Grande River was unusually swollen as a result of heavy rains in the area the previous day.

Other officers in a nearby patrol boat heard a distress signal, and were able to make it to the scene in time to rescue the third agent who had been thrown into the water.

The bodies of the two agents were recovered two days later after a massive search of the area.

Agent Wilson had served with the United States Border Patrol for seven years.

## **Missing CBP Border Patrol Agents Located – Exhaustive Search Results in Long-awaited Recoveries near Los Indios, Texas**

<http://www.socnet.com/archive/index.php/t-42392.html>

September 21, 2004 press release

Los Indios, Texas - It is with deep regret that the McAllen Border Patrol Sector announces that on Tuesday, September 21, 2004, at approximately 1:30 a.m., joint recovery operations lead by U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) Border Patrol agents succeeded in locating the body of Senior Patrol Agent Travis W. Attaway. Searchers located his body approximately one-quarter mile east of the accident scene. At approximately 3:05 a.m., search teams then located the body of Senior Patrol Agent Jeremy M. Wilson 50 yards away from Agent Attaway's location.

"Senior Patrol Agents Travis Attaway and Jeremy Wilson paid the ultimate price, sacrificing their lives to defend our great nation. Senior Patrol Agents Attaway and Wilson embody the dedication and commitment of all our officers and agents to guard our border," said U.S. Customs and Border Protection Commissioner Robert C. Bonner. "Defending our country's borders is a dangerous occupation. Agents like Travis Attaway and Jeremy Wilson are at risk everyday. We Americans mourn their loss while we praise their service. We remember them and we keep them in our prayers."

Two days prior to their bodies being recovered, Attaway and Wilson, along with Senior Patrol Agent Javier Sandoval, were involved in a single-craft boating accident west of the Los Indios Port of Entry, Los Indios, Texas. Although a nearby Border Patrol marine unit rescued SPA Sandoval, they were unable to initially locate Attaway and Wilson. A two-day search and recovery operation unified local, state, and other federal agencies in an exhaustive search of the river area near the

accident.

"Border Patrol agents join the agency knowing from the outset that the rigors of the job demand personal sacrifice. These young men and women put themselves in harm's way to protect our country," said David Aguilar, National Chief of the Border Patrol. "The Rio Grande River is one of nature's, and the Border Patrol's, most dangerous assignments and Agents Attaway and Wilson knew that going in. Yet they accepted the challenge. In a world where the word "hero" is so often carelessly applied, these young men remind us of what true heroism is."

"I am very proud of the Border Patrol agents who have worked so hard to make this grim recovery possible. I am indebted to the other agencies that worked side-by-side with us, around the clock, in hopes of finding two of our own," said McAllen Chief Patrol Agent Ramon T. Ortega. "From fire chiefs to game wardens, dive teams to Red Cross volunteers, these men and women are consummate professionals. Now that we have recovered Agents Attaway and Wilson, our thoughts and prayers remain with their families. We take small comfort in that their bodies were recovered even as we mourn their loss."

Agent Attaway, a seven-year veteran of the Harlingen Station, entered on duty with the U.S. Border Patrol on December 1, 1997. A native of D'Hanis, Texas, a small town roughly fifty miles west of San Antonio, Attaway soon made the Rio Grande Valley his home. Over this tenure, he became active in the station horse, bike, and boat patrols. He also served as a firearms instructor at the Advanced Training Academy in Artesia, New Mexico.

Agent Wilson, a seven-year veteran of the Harlingen Station, entered on duty with the U.S. Border Patrol on November 3, 1997. A native of Bellingham, Washington, a small town located in the northwest corner of Washington State approximately thirteen miles south of the Canadian Border, Wilson made his home in Harlingen, Texas. The son of retired Supervisory Border Patrol Agent Michael Wilson of the Blaine Station, Agent Wilson shared his father's devotion to duty and followed him into the Patrol.

Godspeed boys.

## **2 Border Agents Found Dead in Rio Grande**

<http://www.foxnews.com/story/2004/09/21/2-border-agents-found-dead-in-rio-grande.html>

September 21, 2004 Associated Press

LOS INDIOS, Texas – The bodies of two Border Patrol agents were found early Tuesday along the Rio Grande after their boat capsized, agency officials said. The discoveries were made almost 36 hours after the agents were lost in the waters along the U.S.-Mexico border.

Both bodies were found before dawn, said Daniel Doty, public affairs officer for the **U.S. Border Patrol** ([search](#)) at McAllen.

Senior Border Patrol Agents Travis W. Attaway, 31, of D'Hanis, Texas; and 29-year-old Jeremy Wilson of Ferndale, Wash., disappeared Sunday afternoon when their boat capsized near the **Free Trade Bridge** ([search](#)) at Los Indios.

On Monday, searchers began dragging the bottom of the unusually turgid river to look for the agents. McAllen sector Border Patrol Chief Ramon Ortega had changed the status of the mission from rescue to recovery after more than 18 hours of searching a 10-mile area with boats, helicopters, horse patrols, and search dogs.

Both agents were found along the river's edge, with the body of one found about 2 a.m. and the second located some hours later, according to Harlingen television station KGBT.

Ortega said three agents were on regular patrol near the Los Indios International Bridge on Sunday when their boat capsized at about 2:40 p.m. The bridge is in a rural area about 10 miles south of Harlingen.

The river was exceptionally high following several days of heavy rain, Ortega said. The 19-foot **Predator boat** ([search](#)) that capsized was recovered on Sunday.

After other agents aboard a second boat heard a distress call, they rescued Capt. Javier Sandoval within minutes by throwing out some ropes. Sandoval, 38, of Brownsville, was reportedly doing well at Valley Baptist Medical Center in Harlingen, where he was expected to be discharged as early as Tuesday.

## **Border Patrol agents' bodies discovered after boat accident on Rio Grande**

[http://lubbockonline.com/stories/092204/sta\\_092204074.shtml#.WQI\\_n\\_krKUK](http://lubbockonline.com/stories/092204/sta_092204074.shtml#.WQI_n_krKUK)  
September 22, 2004

HARLINGEN (AP) — The bodies of two Border Patrol agents were found in the Rio Grande early Tuesday, some 36 hours after swirling currents in the unusually rough river capsized their boat, agency officials said.

In a late-morning news conference, Border Patrol Sector Chief Ramon Ortega called for a moment of silence for Senior Border Patrol Agents Travis W. Attaway, 31, of D'Hanis; and 29-year-old Jeremy Wilson of Ferndale, Wash.

"Both of these agents will be remembered as hard-charging, dedicated agents," Ortega said.

Wilson was a third-generation Border Patrol agent. His father is a retired Border Patrol supervisor and his grandfather spent his early career in the Rio Grande Valley. Both spent most of their career patrolling the border with Canada.

Attaway, from a small town about 50 miles west of San Antonio, was remembered for his participation in bike and horse as well as boat patrols.

Both men were single and in their seventh year of service.

It is the first on-duty drowning on the Rio Grande in at least 50 years, officials with the McAllen sector said.

The boat overturned at about 2:40 p.m. Sunday near the Free Trade Bridge at Los Indios, about 98 river miles from the mouth of the river.

A third man on the boat, Capt. Javier Sandoval, was rescued when agents on a second boat heard a distress call and threw out some ropes. Sandoval was released Tuesday from Valley Baptist Medical Center. Ortega said officials had not yet interviewed Sandoval about the accident.

Dozens of local, state and federal agencies assisted in an exhaustive 10-mile search for the men, even dragging portions of the river bottom. Mexican forces assisted by searching the river's south side.

By late Monday, officials using weighted dummies determined that a dam submerged by unusually high waters had created a whirlpool effect that was likely trapping the bodies. Both bodies floated up in that area between 1 a.m. and 3 a.m. Tuesday, within 60 yards of one another and near the accident site.

Texas Parks & Wildlife and the U.S. Coast Guard were investigating the accident.

"As of right now there doesn't appear to be anything that was operational error, foul play, or anything like that, but we are investigating," Parks & Wildlife Lt. Game Warden Alan Teague said.

Teague said information was "unavailable" as to whether life jackets were on the bodies when they surfaced.

The currents carried the boat, a lightweight 19-foot "Predator" model, more than four miles downstream before it was recovered. By the time it was brought from the water, the river had gutted all but the motor and steering wheel.

Recent rains had raised the river by a foot, and current speeds were measured at 5,000 gallons a second.

"That's just tremendous," Ortega said. He said that "compared to a trickle" two years ago, when South Texas was in its tenth year of drought and non-native river weeds so clogged the river that boat patrols were impossible.

He said the Border Patrol might find lessons in the accident review.

"We've got to continue to secure the nation's borders, that's not going to stop," he said. "If it requires more training, we'll do more training. If it's a safety issue, if we did things wrong, we'll address that."

Ortega described the mood among the Patrol as somber.

"This is the part of my job I hate the most," he told The Associated Press. "Having to do eulogies, memorial services, funerals."

## **Missing Border Patrolmen found**

[http://www.brownsvilleherald.com/news/local/article\\_bb6fdfba-fc2e-595f-b3bd-78d21cd28288.html](http://www.brownsvilleherald.com/news/local/article_bb6fdfba-fc2e-595f-b3bd-78d21cd28288.html)

September 22, 2004 By ALLEN ESSEX and FERNANDO DEL VALLE Valley Morning Star

HARLINGEN, September 22, 2004 The bodies of two missing Border Patrol agents were recovered early Tuesday, ending a round-the-clock drama that taxed the nerves of fellow agents and Rio Grande Valley firefighters and law officers assisting in the search of the Rio Grande.

McAllen Border Patrol Sector Chief Ramon T. Ortega called for a moment of silence for our fallen brothers before announcing the early Tuesday recovery of the bodies of senior agents Travis M. Attaway, 31, and Jeremy M. Wilson, 29.

The two agents, along with Border Patrol Capt. Javier Sandoval of the Brownsville area, were patrolling the Rio Grande near the Free Trade Bridge at Los Indios at about 2:40 p.m. Sunday when their 19-foot Baymaster Predator boat capsized.

Wilson was a third-generation Border Patrol agent. His father is a retired Border Patrol supervisor and his grandfather spent his early career in the Rio Grande Valley. Both spent most of their career patrolling the border with Canada. Attaway, from a small town about 50 miles west of San Antonio, was remembered for his participation in bike and horse as well as boat patrols.

Both men were single and in their seventh year of service.

It is the first on-duty drowning on the Rio Grande in at least 50 years, officials with the McAllen sector said.

The drownings on Sunday were the biggest tragedies to befall the Valleys Border Patrol since the 1998 shootings of two agents near San Benito, said agent Eligio Pea.

It's tragic when we lose an agent, but its doubly tragic when we lose more than one agent at a time, he said. Six months ago, we lost a Border Patrol agent in a drowning accident in the Colorado River (near Yuma, Ariz.), Pea said.

Attaways body was found at about 1:30 a.m. Tuesday, Ortega said. Wilsons body was found about 3 a.m. about 60 yards from the accident scene, just west of the Free Trade Bridge at Los Indios.

Ortega extended sympathy to families, friends and fellow officers who have suffered, as we all have, during this ordeal.

Special Agent Dan Motley of the Coast Guard Investigation Service said, There doesn't appear to be anything that was operator error or foul play. As we see right now, we haven't found any physical evidence (of) a contributing factor.

As we see it now, unfortunately, this may have been a tragic accident. But we are investigating. We're analyzing all of the physical evidence that we have. We're talking to some of the people that might have witnessed it.

The increased depth and swiftness of the river due to recent heavy rain are also being factored in, Motley said.

The 17 pounds of the equipment that Border Patrol officers must carry at all times, such as a handgun, extra ammunition magazines, collapsible baton, handcuffs and radio, may have contributed to the drownings, Motley said.

As a law enforcement agency, you are required to have certain items of equipment on you and you carry no more and no less, he said.

The boat was tied to a tree about 4 miles downstream from the accident after it was found Sunday night, Motley said. It was heavily damaged by being upside down and dragged by the Rio Grandes current. It was removed from the water on Monday and is in storage.

The current of the river tore nearly everything we had off of the top, including the console, he said.

The motor was still intact, some of the controls, part of the steering wheel and a battery were still intact, Motley said.

The actual vessel was, for a better word, gutted, because of the nature of the river and the current.

None of the items that were broken off the boat have been found, Motley said.

Since the Border Patrol was formed in 1924, there have been 93 deaths, Flores said.

A memorial service will be announced later, Ortega said.

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[\[ARCHIVED THREAD\] - Border Patrol Agents Travis Attaway and Jeremy Wilson](https://www.ar15.com/forums/t_1_76/276516_Border_Patrol_Agents_Travis_Attaway_and_Jeremy_Wilson.html)  
[https://www.ar15.com/forums/t\\_1\\_76/276516 Border Patrol Agents Travis Attaway and Jeremy Wilson.html](https://www.ar15.com/forums/t_1_76/276516_Border_Patrol_Agents_Travis_Attaway_and_Jeremy_Wilson.html)

Border Patrol Agents Travis Attaway and Jeremy Wilson passed away while doing what they loved with their best friends.

I escorted Travis after their memorial to his hometown where his funeral was. As we made our way from south Texas to Hondo, Texas, we were escorted by every agency that was on the route. In many of the towns and counties that we passed through, local LEs, SOs, DPS troopers, Fire fighters, and EMTs were stopped on the side of the highway and saluted our caravan as we passed. When we came into Hondo, several hundred residents of Hondo and D'Hanis were waiting and walked into the street to meet Travis as he came home.

We rarely get recognized for the work that we do, nor get words of encouragement or praise from the community that we work in. The communities of Hondo and D'Hanis took us in and welcomed us, and even housed some of the agents that came for the funeral. I can't put into words what a sense of pride and honor that they gave us for the job that we do every day.

We now have to carry on and learn some hard lessons from this tragedy, but we are better knowing and serving with Travis and Jeremy.