

Skeletal remains found in Santa Cruz County in 1988 identified as missing Mississippi man

SANTA CRUZ COUNTY, Calif. (KION-TV)- The Santa Cruz County Sheriff's Office said that they have identified skeletal remains found down an embankment off Bonny Doon Road on Feb. 13, 1988.

The victim was positively identified as **Marty Robin Rugar**, who was born in 1966. Rugar's family says he was reported missing in 1983 and was last known to live in Mississippi.

Deputies said the autopsy from back then revealed his cause of death was homicide. The circumstances of his death are currently being investigated.

In 2020, "the Santa Cruz County Sheriff-Coroner's Office, including the Sheriff's Office Forensics Services Division began utilizing forensic genetic genealogy techniques to finally identify the decedent and make notification to next of kin," said the sheriff's office.

With the help of the California Department of Justice Jan Bashinski DNA Lab, Parabon Nanolabs, and the Menominee County Sheriff's, Rugar was identified.

Detectives are unsure when he arrived in California. Rugar's siblings have been notified of his identification.