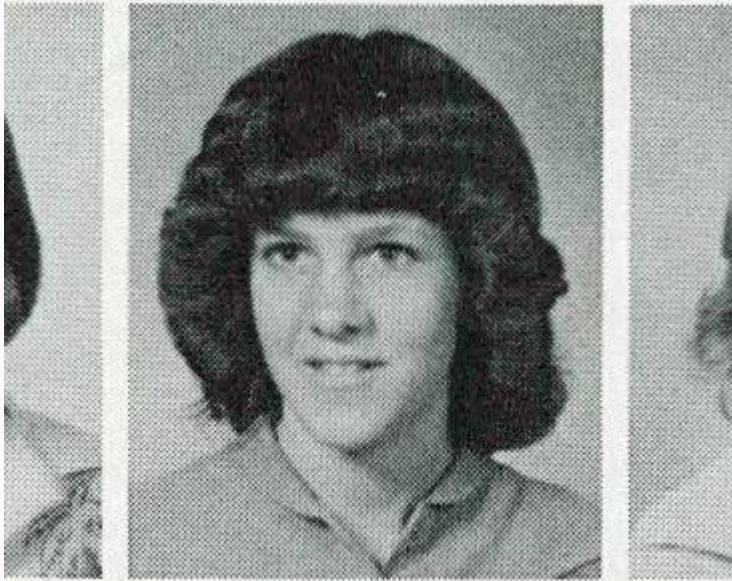


# Idaho State Police Forensic Services and Twin Falls County Sheriff's and Coroner's Office Team with Othram to Identify a 2014 Jane Doe

An unidentified woman, found below the Perrine Bridge in 2014, has now been identified as Cynthia Gunnerson

Solved

Published October 12, 2022 by Michael Vogen



## Summary

Twin Falls County Sheriff's & Coroner's Office, Idaho State Police Forensic Services (ISPFS), Idaho Cold Case Advanced DNA Methods Working Group (ICCADM), and Rocky Mountain Information Network (RMIN), a part of the national Regional Information Sharing System (RISS), funded by the Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA), are pleased to announce they have solved a 2014 unidentified, deceased female case.

In September 2014, a kayaker on the Snake River found the body of a woman floating in the water below the Perrine Bridge. Twin Falls County Deputies, and Search and Rescue responded and recovered the body of the woman. Sadly, there

was no identification on her body. After an autopsy and DNA samples and fingerprints were gathered, the woman, Jane Doe, was buried at Sunset Memorial Park , with a small gathering including members of the coroner's office, law enforcement personnel, and a few community members.

Twin Falls Deputies worked extensively to identify Jane Doe and the circumstances regarding her death. With the help of local media, the community was asked for assistance in identifying her. Investigators combed the area, canvased local motels, restaurants, mental health services, the bus depot, taxi services and truck stops. Her images and fingerprints were entered into national databases and facial recognition programs with no results. The woman was entered in NamUs as UP12926. Fourteen states reached out with missing person cases that matched some of the woman's description, but no matches were made. The case was actively investigated until February of 2016, and then worked sporadically until August of 2020 when it was deemed "inactive," with no new leads. The coroner's office listed her cause of death as suicide.

In December 2021, The Idaho Cold Case Advanced DNA Methods Working Group (ICCADM) contacted investigators and offered their assistance. In April 2022, forensic evidence from unknown woman was sent to Othram. Othram scientists used Forensic-Grade Genome Sequencing® to build a comprehensive DNA profile that could be used in a genetic genealogy search. Othram used forensic genetic genealogy to produce an investigative lead.

The investigative lead was return to law enforcement and the resulting information from this work gave deputies the information they needed. They contacted the identified parents who submitted their DNA for further testing. Fingerprint and DNA results from the Idaho State Police Forensic Services Lab confirmed the female's identity as Cynthia Gunnerson (a.k.a. Sasha Ergateage) from San Diego, California.

"I'm thankful for the hard work and diligence of our investigative team throughout this time, and for the assistance and collaboration of the ICCADM in solving this case, and being able to help bring closure to her family," said Sheriff Tom Carter.

**ISPFS is pleased that Idaho cold cases are being solved through collaborative efforts to bring closure to Idaho families and those throughout the country**

**-Matthew Gamette, Laboratory System Director of Idaho State Police Forensic Services**

The Gunnerson case is the second solved by the ICCADM. ICCADM is a resource for state, local, and county agencies to identify cold cases where advanced DNA testing methods (like Forensic Genetic Genealogy), criminal intelligence, and other techniques could provide new investigative leads. The group started in 2020 to assist Idaho law enforcement agencies in investigating unsolved sexual assaults, homicides, and unidentified remains cases when additional DNA evidence is available and DNA has been entered into the state or national Combined DNA Index System (CODIS), but no probative match was located. The group is administered by ISPFS, and is a collaboration with Idaho State Police, the Idaho Sheriff's Association, the Idaho Chiefs of Police Association, the Idaho Prosecuting Attorney's Association, Boise State University Criminal Justice Department, and the Idaho State Police Statistical Analysis Center. ISPFS recently received a \$3 million grant to fund the next three years of work.

"ISPFS is pleased that Idaho cold cases are being solved through collaborative efforts to bring closure to Idaho families and those throughout the country," said Matthew Gamette, Laboratory System Director of Idaho State Police Forensic Services. "The relationship between ISPFS, ISP, ICCADM, and local law enforcement demonstrates a tireless and unending commitment to solving cold cases. Our team looks forward to working with agencies and announcing more case resolutions," said Gamette.

Cynthia Gunnerson's parents are grateful to have answers about their daughter, and ask for privacy as they grieve her loss. The investigative team expresses their deepest sympathy and condolences to them at this time.