

Connecticut Office of the Chief Medical Examiner Partners with Othram to Identify a 2006 John Doe

DNA evidence and genetic genealogy reveal the identity of **Brian Canfield**, 20 years after his remains were discovered in East Haddam.

Solved

Summary

In October 2006, a human skull was recovered along the Connecticut River near the Salmon River Boat Launch in East Haddam, Connecticut. The Connecticut Office of the Chief Medical Examiner responded and began collecting evidence and investigating. At the time, the remains could not be identified and there was no way to determine the person's identity.

Despite a lengthy investigation, the person could not be identified. Details of the case were entered into the National Missing and Unidentified Persons System (NamUs) as UP8907.

In 2022, the Connecticut Office of the Chief Medical Examiner submitted forensic evidence to Othram in The Woodlands, Texas to determine if advanced DNA testing could help identify the person. Othram scientists successfully developed a DNA extract from the provided evidence and then used Forensic-Grade Genome Sequencing® to build a comprehensive DNA profile for the person. Othram's in-house forensic genetic genealogy team used the profile in a genetic genealogy search to develop new investigative leads that were returned to law enforcement.

Using this new information, a follow-up investigation was conducted leading investigators to potential relatives of the person. Reference DNA samples were collected from potential relatives and compared to the DNA profile of the unknown person using KinSNP® Rapid Relationship Testing. This investigation led to the positive identification of the person, who is now known to be Brian Canfield.

Canfield, born December 1, 1962, was a 37-year-old Vermont man who went missing after a boating accident while fishing in 2001. Connecticut State Police informed Vermont State Police of the match, this incident is not considered suspicious, and the Vermont State Police case is now closed.

This case was crowdfunded on DNASolves. We are grateful to those who generously donated funds to cover Othram's casework costs. Individuals who have taken a consumer DNA test can aid ongoing forensic investigations by joining the [DNASolves database](#). Expanding the pool of available DNA data increases the likelihood of successful identifications, helping to reunite families with their missing loved ones and resolve cases that have remained unsolved for years.

This is the 9th publicly announced case in the State of Connecticut where officials leveraged Othram's identity inference pipeline. Explore other cases on [Othram's website](#).