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**Allenstown**

## Months later, body of hunter found

70-year-old had gone missing in Bear Brook

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Nearly five months after 70-year-old Russell Bussiere went missing while hunting in Bear Brook State Park, a family friend found his body off a trail near Dodge Road in Allenstown, according to Allenstown Police Chief Shaun Mulholland.

Bussiere's family and friends had organized searches for the last three weekends. Yesterday, they had enlisted friends of Bussiere's with low flying aircraft to assist the effort. Rainy weather caused the pilots to cancel, but a small group of searchers went out on foot. Jeff Fleury, a family friend from Suncook, found the Hooksett man's body at around 10 a.m., family members said.



[Zoom](#)

"It's a bittersweet moment, but it's absolutely nice to know that it's done and he's safe and it's closure," said Susan Bussiere, Russell Bussiere's sister in law.

The body was found with Bussiere's camouflage clothes, gun, identification, cell phone and GPS unit yesterday. Mulholland said that the police are waiting on a DNA analysis to make the identification official. The state medical examiner will examine the body to determine the cause of death; Mulholland said there was no evidence of foul play.

Family members said that Bussiere was found lying down with his legs crossed and his gun nearby. His wallet was intact.

"Where he wanted his ashes to be spread and where he laid himself down is less than half a mile (apart)," Michael Bussiere, his son, said.

Russell Bussiere was born in Suncook and never left the area, ultimately moving to Hooksett to raise his family. He founded Granite State Curb Setters, a company now run by his children. Family members said he had hunted in Bear Brook for 40 years and loved being outside, hunting and fishing. He'd been retired for several years and spent his winters in Florida. He was in New Hampshire at the time of his death because he was waiting for a grandchild to be born; the baby was delivered five days after his disappearance.

His wife, Barbara, died in 1996. He leaves behind three children and five grandchildren.

On the day of his disappearance, Bussiere was hunting deer, as he often did on early weekend mornings. He had planned to meet his son Michael at noon. At 10:30, the two talked by radio. Michael Bussiere reported his father missing that afternoon, after he did not show up for their appointment and did not respond to radio or cell phone calls.

Local and state officials, helped by more than 200 volunteers, combed the park in the days following Bussiere's disappearance on Dec. 2. But the seven inches of snow that fell that night complicated the search. Though volunteers searched the woods in teams and helicopters and search dogs brought in professional support, Mulholland said that the snow would have made it difficult for rescuers to spot Bussiere in the location where he was found yesterday.

Susan Bussiere said that Bussiere's son Ritchie remembers walking the path the first night, only 15 feet from where the body was found.

"His son Ritchie, with a group, literally went down that path screaming his name, calling his phone, that night," she said.

Because Bussiere was an experienced outdoorsman, was dressed warmly, and was carrying matches, the state Fish and Game Department maintained hope that the hunter would be found alive for four days. On Dec. 6, the department determined that their search was for a body.

Search efforts continued sporadically through the winter, Mulholland said, but the family did not resume searching in earnest until the snow pack had melted.

"The last three weekends, there's been about 25 of us going out every Saturday and Sunday," Susan Bussiere said. Bussiere said that help has come from family members, friends and Russell Bussiere's professional contacts.

Susan and Michael Bussiere said that they've been moved by the help they've received from the community. Friends, family and strangers have given their time to help search, offered professional services, and made other gestures, like bringing food to the family.

Once state officials have completed their investigation, the family will hold a memorial service.

"It'll turn into a thank you," Susan Bussiere said. "And anyone who wants to stop in, it'll turn into a thank you."

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