



# State of New Mexico

## *New Mexico State Police*

January 4, 2008

4:00 p.m.

Contact:

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Public Information Officer

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For Immediate Release

### **Missing Hiker's Body Located** **Apparent Suicide**

Gila Wilderness: (December 21, 2007) – State Police located the body of missing hiker Arsalan Serajian in the Gila Cliff Dwellings Wilderness off Woody's trail on December 21, 2007. If you recall, back in November of 2007, we sent out a press release regarding his disappearance and indicated that his vehicle had been located at the Gila Cliff Dwellings visitor's parking lot. Police along with search and rescue teams searched the Gila area by ground and air several times to no avail.

On December 19, 2007, another hiker found a cut up piece of a driver's license approximately one half mile up Woody's trail and turned it into the park ranger's office. The piece of the driver's license contained the letters "jian". State Police Agent Carl Christiansen believed this to be the driver's license of Serajian and along with Park Ranger Steve Riley, began to search the area described by the hiker on the morning of December 21. At approximately 10:30 am they discovered the body in a steep snow covered canyon. Next to the body they located his backpack, two sawed off shotguns and one pistol. It was apparent that Serajian had suffered a shotgun wound and had been there for some time. There were no other apparent injuries or signs of foul play. The body was later recovered and sent to the Office of the Medical Investigator for an autopsy. Investigators determined the guns had been purchased by Serajian. The death is being ruled a suicide.

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