



## Tulalip Police Department

# mediarelease

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

November 18, 2020

On November 17, 2020, at approximately 8:30 pm two officers with Tulalip Tribal Police Department Fish and Wildlife Division were following another boat into the Everett Marina to ensure the fishermen reached port. The Tulalip Fish and Wildlife Officers were returning to Tulalip Bay Marina when a rogue wave hit their 24ft patrol vessel causing it to capsize. Both crew members were thrown into the water.

Officer Shawn Edge, boat operator and captain, was located and rescued near Hat Island by Tulalip Tribal fishermen last night and is currently recovering in the hospital. Officer Charlie Cortez is still missing and presumed deceased. Charlie is the first officer to die in the line of duty with the Tulalip Police Department.

“As our search and rescue effort transitions to a search and recovery, we are heartbroken. Our people are connected to the water and we know what we risk when we go out. Today we lost a good man, a father, brother and son,” said Tulalip Chairwoman Teri Gobin. “Our hands go up to the many fishermen and rescue workers who answered the call to find our missing officer. In the face of tragedy, our community came together and we will continue to come together as we take care of his family.”

A coordinated search and rescue effort began immediately and continue today with multiple 13 agencies including Tulalip Tribal Fish and Wildlife, Tulalip Bay Fire, Everett Police and Fire, Snohomish County Search and Rescue, Skagit County Sheriff’s office, the US Coast Guard, in addition to numerous tribal fishing vessels from Tulalip and neighboring tribes.

“Charlie was a wonderful man and officer. We are devastated by this loss,” said Tulalip Police Chief Chris Sutter. “Tulalip Fish and Wildlife are often called upon to conduct searches such as this one. I know Charlie would have been there for you, and I can’t say thank you enough to the many individuals and agencies that came together to be there for him. The search for our missing officer will continue until he is brought home.

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Chris Sutter, *Chief of Police*

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*The Tulalip Tribes are federally recognized successors in interest to the Snohomish, Snoqualmie, Skykomish, and other allied tribes and bands signatory to the Treaty of Point Elliott.*

