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The area where a van crashed off a bridge, killing 14 migrant workers, in Maine on Thursday.

Crash kills 14 in Maine's deadliest traffic accident

The Associated Press

ALLAGASH WILDERNESS WATERWAY, Maine — A van full of migrant workers veered off a one-lane bridge and plunged into a river in the northern Maine wilderness Thursday, killing 14 men in the deadliest traffic accident in state history, officials said.

The lone survivor escaped through the back window as the van sank in 15 feet of water 90 miles from the nearest paved state road, said Stephen McCausland of the Maine Public Safety Department.

The accident happened on an unpaved logging road near the entrance to the Allagash Wilderness Waterway, a state-administered area popular with canoeists 300 miles north of Portland. State police and divers had

to scramble to get to the site aboard float planes and helicopters.

The survivor said the van was traveling at 70 mph before arriving at the bridge, McCausland said. There is no speed limit on logging roads, which are privately owned.

One wheel on the van climbed the curb of the narrow bridge before the van plummeted into the water, McCausland said. The single-lane wooden bridge has no railings.

Fourteen bodies were pulled from the van, McCausland said.

The survivor and four victims were from Guatemala; the other 10 men were from Honduras, McCausland said. They were on their way to their job clearing plots of land for a timber company.