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## PRESS RELEASE GARFIELD COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

### **For Immediate Release**

#### **Search and Rescue teams locate Missing Hiker**

**Garfield County, Colorado** – At 7:13 a.m. on Saturday, June 6, 2009, Garfield County Communications Authority received a call requesting help in locating a missing hiker. The caller stated that on Friday, June 5, 2009 a member of their 5 person hiking party left their Stillwater Reservoir camp alone to go hiking and had not returned. Thad Green Childs III, 33 years old from Copper Mountain, CO left the camp at approximately 12:30 p.m. on June 5<sup>th</sup>. He had stated his intention was to hike above camp in the Flattops Wilderness area located in northeast Garfield County.

Garfield County Sheriff's Office Search and Rescue responded to the Stillwater Reservoir area on June 6<sup>th</sup> at approximately 11:35 a.m. Due to the remote location of the incident, Routt County Search and Rescue responded with an additional seven (7) team members to aid in the search. Two ground search teams began search operations in the area, which still had heavy snowpack in the higher terrain.

Tracks believed to have been made by the missing hiker were located a short time later heading toward the ridgeline northwest of Stillwater Reservoir. DBS Helicopters from Rifle, CO was contacted and responded to the area to aid in the search at approximately 1:00 p.m. The helicopter was able to locate more tracks in the snowfields along the ridgeline. This area is known as "Devils Causeway"; an extremely technical area that creates a knife-edge ridgeline of unstable rock and snow. Search and Rescue teams were flown in to higher terrain where the tracks had been located. Additional searching from the air resulted in locating more tracks, with no other sign of the hiker.

At approximately 5:00 p.m. one of the ground searchers who had been picked up by the helicopter spotted a lone hiker on an open ridge north of the Causeway. The helicopter landed and confirmed it was the missing hiker. Fortunately, the hiker was located just prior to search operations being suspended for the day. He was found uninjured but tired, and was transported back to the camp in good health.

Responding agencies include Garfield County Sheriff's Office Search and Rescue, Routt County Search and Rescue, and helicopter response from DBS Helicopters out of Rifle, CO.