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PRESS RELEASE GARFIELD COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

Garfield County, Colorado;

On September 13, 2009 Garfield County Sheriff's Office Search and Rescue responded to two separate calls for help.

Garfield County Emergency Communications Center received the first call on September 12th, 2009 at approximately 11:44 pm from Lisa Briscoe of New Castle, CO reporting her husband Ryan Briscoe and two friends, Jacob Maulden and John Poindexter overdue from a mountain bike trip in the Clinetop Mesa area northwest of New Castle.

The three men had been dropped off by friends at the top of Hadley Gulch on Clinetop Mesa at approximately 5:00 pm, and were going to ride their mountain bikes down Hadley Gulch to the bottom of the Clinetop Road. After the bike riders failed to arrive at the designated pickup point, their friends and family became concerned and requested assistance in locating them. Four Garfield County Sheriff's Office Search and Rescue personnel responded to the Hadley Gulch trailhead at 2:58 am on September 13th and met the family members who had remained in the area. A ground team hiked up the trail and contacted the three mountain bikers at 7:38 am. The men were uninjured and had taken shelter from a thunderstorm approximately half way down the 4 mile long canyon. All parties were reunited without injuries at 8:06 am on Sunday, September 13, 2009.

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Garfield County Emergency Communications Center received the second call at approximately 10:50 pm on September 13, 2009 from 48 year old Rodney Wulff of Minnesota. Mr. Wulff reported he and his hunting partner had been elk hunting in the Coffee Pot area of the Flattops Wilderness in the White River National Forest. His hunting partner, 58 year old Kenneth Hemp had not returned to their set rendezvous point that evening.

The Garfield County Sheriff's Office Search and Rescue set up a command post at Broken Rib Trailhead, located on Forest Rd 600 at 3:40 am on Monday, September 14, 2009. Search and Rescue performed a search of the area on ATV's, but briefly suspended the search until daylight.

As the search team resumed their efforts that morning the lost hunter arrived, uninjured, at the incident command location. He had become lost after dusk on Sunday, and was unable to find his way back to the rendezvous point. The hunter had built a fire under trees to stay warm after a late evening thunderstorm, and had decided to wait until daylight to find his way out of the area. He was found by other hunters approximately three miles northeast of his last known location the next morning and was led back to the command post. The two men were reunited at approximately 7:48 am.

Garfield County Sheriff's Office Search and Rescue averages approximately 35 to 50 search and rescue missions annually. In the last two months they have had missions every weekend, oftentimes with multiple calls on those weekends, and have totaled over 40 calls for service so far this year.

Citizens are reminded to take precautions when in the back country. Always bring adequate clothing including rain gear and clothing that can be layered due to inclement weather patterns, bring adequate food and water, and always let someone know where you are going and when you will return.