

PRESS RELEASE

Search and Rescue:

For Immediate Release:

Wallace, Idaho

Date: November 21, 2011

On November 19th 2011 at 3:57 PM Pacific Time, the Shoshone County Sheriff's Office received a report of three overdue snowmobilers. The three men from Spangle Washington were identified as Levi Wernz, 19 years old; Todd Clift, 21 years old and Gary Emtman, 49 years old. The men were snowmobiling near Dominion Peak, South of Saltese, on the Idaho Montana Border. Clift and Wernz were trying to get down to Silver Lake but got lost on the way. Wernz and Clift were unable to get back to Dominion Peak. Clift was able to call for help but did not know his exact location. Emtman was able to make it back to the group's truck at the Taft trail head. Emtman was later able to provide information about where Wernz and Clift had gone.

Deputy John Hayes from the Shoshone County Sheriff's Office and Deputy Adam Cole from the Mineral County Sheriff's Office coordinated the search and rescue mission.

The Air Force Rescue Coordination Center at Tyndall Air Force Base in Florida provided assistance requesting cell phone forensics and a helicopter. Cell phone forensic data was provided by Major James Ogden with the Civil Air Patrol.

Searchers from Mineral County Search and Rescue rode snowmobiles into the area to locate Wernz and Clift with no success. On November 20th at 2:00 AM, Mountain Time, three searchers set out on foot to try and locate Wernz and Clift. At about 2:30 AM, (MT) a helicopter crew from the 40th Squadron based at Malmstrom Air Force Base, Great Falls Montana headed to the search area. This was the closest crew available due to the weather.

Shortly after 6:00 AM (MT) the helicopter crew, lead by Lt. Col. Kardoes located Wernz and Clift. Both were hoisted into the helicopter and flown to Saltese, Montana where Medical personnel were waiting. Wernz and Clift were both in good health.