

NEWS RELEASE



**Russel E. Burger, Sheriff
Lane County Sheriff's Office
125 East 8th Avenue
Eugene, OR 97401
(541) 682-4150 / FAX (541) 682-4522
Email: sheriffs.office@co.lane.or.us**

CASE NUMBER: 08-10242

DATE/TIME OF INCIDENT: December 26-27, 2008

DATE/TIME OF RELEASE: December 27, 2008 - 1300

NATURE OF STORY: Lost Skier

LOCATION: Willamette Pass Ski Area

INVOLVED: Eugene Perry, 57, of Klamath Falls

DETAILS:

At approximately 7:30 p.m. on 12-26-08, the Lane County Sheriff's Office was advised of a lost skier in the Willamette Pass ski area in southeastern Lane County.

Eugene Perry, 57, of Klamath Falls became separated from a family member he was skiing with at about 3:30 and had not returned. Willamette Pass staff and ski patrol volunteers were already searching and Sheriff's Office Search and Rescue personnel responded to the area.

Crews searched throughout the night along the trail systems and perimeter of the ski area. When Perry realized he was lost and darkness was falling, he came upon a small three sided shelter near a cross country ski trail. Perry was able to build a fire and stayed at the shelter overnight. In the morning Perry walked down and ultimately reached Highway 58, and then walked back to the resort, arriving at about 9:00 a.m. Perry was tired but uninjured. He had carried a small pack while skiing containing a bottle of water and some food. His ski clothing and the items he carried, coupled with his discovery of the shelter made it possible for him to survive overnight with relatively little difficulty.

Conditions overnight in the area included new snow accumulation of 2-4" and temperatures in the mid to upper 20's. The Lane County Sheriff's Office reminds everyone who recreates in remote areas to plan, prepare and not exceed the limitations of the environment, their own skills or equipment. Search and Rescue personnel from Deschutes County assisted and mountain SAR crews from several areas of the Oregon Cascades were either on the way or on alert and preparing to send help.

Prepared by: Captain William Thompson

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