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*"A Professional Service Agency"*

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

March 9, 2019

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UPDATE- Search for Marine Corps Lt. Matthew Kraft Continues

An intense multiagency search for missing Marine Corps Lieutenant Matthew Kraft has lead search experts to the Kearsarge Pass area today.

Matthew Kraft's vehicle was located by Inyo Search and Rescue at 9:00pm last night near Lower Grays Meadows (above Independence CA). Lt. Kraft's itinerary was the Sierra High Route, which included hiking out of Kearsarge Pass on Feb 24h and hiking out near the Twin Lakes area by Bridgeport on March 4th or 5<sup>th</sup>. On March 4th Lt. Kraft's father contacted Mono Sheriff after not hearing from his son.

Mono County Sheriff's Office began checking trail heads in the Bridgeport area on March 4<sup>th</sup>; cell phone forensics initiated by Mono Sheriff showed that his last phone activity was in the Independence area. Inyo County Sheriff's Office Search and Rescue began a search on March 5, 2019. Winter storms in the Sierra have made search activities extremely difficult. However, both ground teams and aerial reconnaissance have been utilized and will continue to be utilized as weather permits.

Today Inyo County Search and Rescue members deployed a snowcat to rope-tow search and rescue team members on skis up to the Onion Valley parking area (above Independence CA). The SAR team members will clear as much area as possible on Kearsarge Pass. Team members will work as long as weather permits; another storm is anticipated this afternoon through the weekend.

Agencies assisting in this search along the Sierra High Route include Marine Corps, Mono County Sheriff, Mono County Search and Rescue, Inyo County Search and Rescue, Inyo County Sheriff, Madera County Sheriff, Fresno County Sheriff, Sequoia and Kings National Park, Yosemite National Park, and California Office of Emergency Services. Aerial support has been provided by Fresno County Sheriff, CHP H-80, CHP H-40, and Air National Guard.

Individuals with any information regarding Kraft's whereabouts should immediately contact Inyo County Sheriff's Office at (760) 878-0383/ option 4; Mono County Sheriff's Office at (760) 932-7549/ option 7; or Fresno County Sheriff's Office at (559) 600-8400.

For additional inquiries, please contact the 1st Marine Division press officer Capt. Paul Gainey at (760) 725-9226 or email [paul.gainey@usmc.mil](mailto:paul.gainey@usmc.mil)