



"A Professional Service Agency"

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INTENSE MULTIAGENCY SEARCH IS SUSPENDED

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"Search operations will be suspended," said Inyo County Sheriff, Bill Lutze. Lutze went on to say, "Search teams gave everything they could to locate Mr. DeVan. The scope of this search endeavor has been one of the largest known in Inyo County, and the commitment of the teams involved has been remarkable. This is very difficult to reconcile, for everyone involved in the operation."

For seven days, search teams scoured the terrain in the John Muir Wilderness and Kings Canyon National Park from Mt. Agassiz to Mt. Gilbert and throughout the Treasure Lakes and Bishop Pass area in search of missing hiker Ric DeVan. The massive multiagency search included involvement from Inyo County Search and Rescue, Kern County Search and Rescue, Tulare County Search and Rescue, CHP, Sequoia-Kings National Park Service, Forest Service, China Lake Mountain Rescue Group, San Bernardino Mountain Rescue, Mono County Search and Rescue, Yosemite Search and Rescue, Marin County Search and Rescue, San Dimas Search and Rescue, and Los Angeles Sheriff's Overhead Assistance Teams consisting of Sierra Madre Search and Rescue and Montrose Search and Rescue. California State OES was essential in coordinating resource involvement.

"Ground crews, canine teams, and aviation units gave a painstaking effort to locate DeVan and track down any leads that may have offered insight into his disappearance," said Incident Commander, Inyo County Sheriff's Corporal Terry Waterbury. "As further leads become available, they will be thoroughly investigated," concluded Waterbury.

DeVan's last confirmed location was a signed register book at the summit of Mt. Goode on July 4th. In the book DeVan stated that he would be traversing to Mt. Johnson, a neighboring peak, next. Search teams have described the terrain between Mt. Goode and Mt. Johnson as treacherous, and extremely unstable. "The exposure of this traverse and steep drop-offs make the climb between Mt. Goode and Trapezoid Peak particularly hazardous," said spokeswoman for the National Park Services, Erika Jostad.

DeVan set out on a hike with his family on July 3rd out of South Lake toward Bishop Pass. Family went with DeVan as far as the Long Lake area; the plan was to rendezvous late in the afternoon on July 4th at Treasure Lakes after DeVan traversed the ridge from Bishop Pass to Mt. Johnson. Inyo County Search and Rescue were notified Saturday July 5th, after DeVan failed to show up as planned.

The Inyo County Sheriff's Department is interested in talking with anyone who may have seen or had contact with Ric DeVan, especially after he signed the registration book on Mt. Goode on July 4th. DeVan is said to be wearing a yellow shirt with black side panels, tan pants, light colored back-pack, grey jacket with black trim, a beige or green ball cap, and an orange, gold and purple National Geographic bandana.

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