

Man Found Along Trail Ridge Road

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Date: January 30, 2015

After a full day of search efforts yesterday, Thursday, January 29, for Jay Starr Jr., rangers were travelling east bound on Trail Ridge Road, where they had searched extensively, when they saw Starr lying on a rock along the shoulder of the road. Starr was found in poor condition and was initially uncooperative. Starr was subsequently provided care and assistance. Due to Starr's exposure above treeline over multiple days he was flown by Flight for Life to Medical Center of the Rockies at 4:15 p.m. As this is a continuing investigation, no further information will be released at this time.

On Monday, January 26, park rangers contacted Jay Starr Jr, 34, from Cohoes, New York. Starr had entered Rocky Mountain National Park on foot and indicated he was planning to walk westbound over Trail Ridge Road. Rangers advised him against this based on his behavior and his lack of preparedness for winter alpine conditions. Starr was wearing tennis shoes, jeans or tan canvas pants, a black/blue jacket, no hat or gloves and was carrying a plastic grocery bag.

Trail Ridge Road is the highest continuous paved road in the United States, with its highest point reaching 12,183 feet. Over ten miles of the road are above 11,500 feet. The road closed to vehicles for the season on November 4, 2014. The closures are located at Many Parks Curve on the east side and Colorado River Trailhead on the west side. The road is not maintained during the winter. Conditions on the road range from bare wind-blown asphalt to deep snow drifts.

On Tuesday afternoon, January 27, park rangers on skis contacted Starr above Many Parks Curve on Trail Ridge Road. Rangers were concerned for his welfare and were attempting to assist him. Starr fled from rangers up a dry section of the road. Starr continued to elude rangers until darkness fell.

Beginning early on Wednesday, January 28, two teams of rangers attempted to locate Starr again on Trail Ridge Road. One team came from the east side of the park and the other team came from the west side of the park. Rangers faced

wind gusts of 50 to 60 miles per hour. These high winds and blowing snow hampered following Starr's footprints. Aerial operations were not possible due to high winds. The entire road corridor was checked

Rangers were assisted by a Colorado Parks and Wildlife Officer with an All-Terrain Vehicle (ATV) equipped with snow tracks and by an over-snow tracked vehicle and operator from Estes Park Light and Power. The motorized equipment was only used on Trail Ridge Road.

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