



February 19, 2020

Weld County Sheriff's Office deputies, K9 save man from last week's snow squall

Several Weld County Sheriff's Office deputies battled last week unfavorable conditions to save a man who was lost and alone in extreme winter weather.

At 9:40 p.m. last Wednesday, Feb. 12, deputies Sean Wagner, Elijah Howard, Thomas Lamb, Andrew Annan and Ben Rexroad, along with K9, Ringo, responded to a call involving a young man who knocked on a resident's door, asked for water, and then ran away after the resident called 911. The young man was believed to be in his late teens or early 20s, and was described as wearing a hoodie, jeans, and tennis shoes.

At the time, it was 17 degrees, according to the "weather" app. With the wind chill, it felt more like 3 degrees.

Deputies Howard and Wagner were the first to respond to the scene. Recognizing the dangerous situation the man was in, the deputies began looking for and identified the man's shoe impressions in the snow near the caller's house. Howard later located the same shoe impressions on Weld County Road 15, south of Weld 90, near Cobb Lake about 9 miles south of Wellington.

Deputies Lamb, Annan and Rexroad, and Ringo, responded to assist. The deputies set up a perimeter as Rexroad deployed Ringo to begin tracking the young man. Lamb was able to take a position of advantage near an oil well site, utilizing a thermal imaging camera and night vision goggles to search a large open field. Lamb also provided radio updates to help orient the rest of the team as they walked through the field in the snow squall.

After walking a mile and a half, Ringo and the deputies located the man laying on the ground in the fetal position. The man, a 22-year-old Columbus, Nebraska-native living in Fort Collins, was so cold he couldn't walk. Deputies helped him to his feet and carried him to Lamb's patrol vehicle. Lamb then drove the man to Weld roads 19 and 88 to meet with medical personnel, who were still driving to the scene.

Medical confirmed the man's core body temperature was low, and his shoes were frozen to his feet. He was taken to Poudre Valley Hospital for treatment.

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When the man was found by deputies, he was succumbing to the cold and going to sleep. Medical personnel told deputies he more than likely wouldn't have survived the elements if he had not been found. He has since made a full recovery.

The man later told first responders he was walking to Cheyenne from Fort Collins on U.S. 287 when he got lost in the blizzard. The man stopped at the caller's house near Weld roads 86 and 13 but ran away when the homeowner called 911.

The deputies put in a total of four hours locating the man. It was the second cold weather save in as many days.

The day before, on Tuesday, Feb. 11, deputies Daniel Trujillo and Donovan Pecorella successfully tracked for more than 4 hours an 11-year-old boy who ran away from his home south of Keenesburg.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Steve Reams'.

Steve Reams – Sheriff