

# 2 stuck snowmobilers spend night on Buff Pass

**Matt Stensland**  
Steamboat Pilot & Today

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## STEAMBOAT SPRINGS

— A Breckenridge man and a Minturn woman had to spend the night in the woods after getting their snowmobiles severely stuck Saturday on Buffalo Pass.

The couple called for help at about 6:30 p.m. after getting stuck in a drainage west of Dinosaur Lake.

Because of the avalanche danger, terrain and it getting dark, Routt County Search and Rescue volunteers decided not to go out Saturday night.

“It was a very difficult decision for me to make that call,” Search and Rescue Incident Commander Kristia Check-Hill said. “It was the right call. It was safer for everyone.”

Check-Hill was able to talk to the couple over the

phone and told them to build a snow cave. They had a lighter with them and were able to build a fire. They otherwise did not have a light source.

Check-Hill said it did not make sense to send a helicopter to rescue the couple because the couple would have had to hike a significant distance through deep snow to the helicopter.

A few miles away at the Storm Peak Laboratory, low overnight temperatures dipped to about 20 degrees.

Six Search and Rescue volunteers left for the rescue mission at 6 a.m. Sunday, using snowmobiles and skis.

By about 9:20 a.m., the

**Kristia Check-Hill**  
Search and Rescue Incident Commander

volunteers were within voice contact of the couple.

“We could only take our sleds so far,” Check-Hill said.

The couple was brought snowshoes, so they could hike to the Search and Rescue snowmobiles.

The couple’s snowmobiles could not be freed.

“Unfortunately, the sleds are still sitting there,” Check-Hill said.

Everyone was back at the Dry Lake staging area by about 1 p.m.

“It was a long day,” Check-Hill said.

*To reach Matt Stensland, call 970-871-4247, email mstensland@SteamboatToday.com or follow him on Twitter @SBTStensland.*

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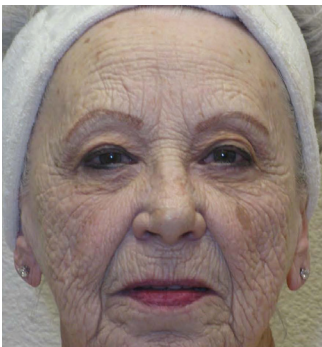
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