

CHAFFEE COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE
Salida, Colorado
PRESS RELEASE
July 16, 2019

On July 15, 2019 the Chaffee County Communications Center was contacted by hikers on La Plata Peak stating that they hear a person yelling for help.

Chaffee County Search and Rescue North and South responded to the area where the screams were last heard and began searching. Searchers scoured the area until just before nightfall when they noticed a light flashing below the summit. Searchers responded closer however they were unable to get into a better position due to the extreme steep and technical terrain. Flight for Life was called for assistance in spotting a possible victim and to pinpoint a better location. They flew into the area and spotted a person on a very steep snowfield. Rescuers were not able to reach the person from their position so a Reach helicopter was contacted and they flew a paramedic/search and rescue member into a better location. After being dropped near the summit the search and rescue member was able to get to the victim at approximately 0300 hrs.

By this time arrangements were being made through the Search and Rescue Board of Colorado for air assistance to lift the victim from the treacherous location. The Air National Guard, High Altitude Training Center, Gypsum, Colorado, was contacted and arrangements were made to have a helicopter hoist the victim from the location as early as possible.

At approximately 0730 hrs the victim was hoisted from his location and transported to a Flight for Life helicopter which was waiting at Twin Lakes. The victim, identified as Jeffrey Ashby, age 65, was transported to Summit Medical Center for treatment of possible fractures.

For more information please contact Chaffee County Sheriff John Spezze at 719-207-3199.