



Press Release For Immediate Release

Maroon Bells Overdue Climber and Recovery Operation

Date of Incident: September 2, 2026

Case Number: #26P010628

Pitkin County, Colorado – On Wednesday, September 2, 2026, the Pitkin County Sheriff's Office was notified of an overdue climber believed to be in the Maroon Bells-Snowmass Wilderness. The subject's intended route and itinerary were not initially known.

After further investigation, information and notes were discovered in the subject's rental vehicle related to climbing the Maroon Bells. Based on this information, Mountain Rescue Aspen (MRA) focused search efforts in the Maroon Bells area.

On the morning of Thursday, September 3rd, MRA coordinated with CareFlight of the Rockies to conduct an aerial search of the area. An MRA member accompanied the CareFlight crew to assist with the search. During the aerial search, the climber was located deceased and tentatively identified in very technical and difficult terrain to access.

Recovery is planned for Tuesday, September 8th. To safely perform recovery operations, the United States Forest Service has issued a closure of Maroon Peak. Please see the attached Forest Service notification.

<https://www.fs.usda.gov/r02/whiteriver/alerts/maroon-peak-climbing-access-closed-sept-8>

Confirmation and final identification of the climber will be conducted after the recovery is complete. The family of the missing climber has been notified.

Mountain Rescue Aspen and the Pitkin County Sheriff's Office remind those traveling in the backcountry to leave a detailed itinerary with a trusted person before departing, including the intended route, expected return time, and contingency plans. Backcountry travelers should also carry appropriate equipment, be prepared for rapidly changing mountain conditions, and carry a reliable two-way satellite communication device when traveling in areas without cellular service.

The Pitkin County Sheriff's Office would like to thank the all-volunteer team of Mountain Rescue Aspen and CareFlight of the Rockies for their assistance with this mission.

MEDIA CONTACTS:

media@pitkinsheriff.com
970-400-7276

media@mountainrescueaspen.org
970-429-3400

Pitkin County Sheriff's Office

Administration: 530 East Main Street · Suite 103 · Aspen · Colorado 81611 · 970.920.5300 · Fax 970.920.5307 · pitkinsheriff.com
Detention: 530 East Main Street · Department J · Aspen · Colorado 81611 · 970.920.5331 · Fax 970.920.5489 · pitkinsheriff.com