Water Conservancy employee finds missing Washington state man

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Haven Scott

A man reported missing in Washington state was found Wednesday west of Cedar City, nearly 1,100 miles from his home, by a Central Iron County Water Conservancy District employee who was out performing routine checks on water tanks.

The 72 year-old man was reported missing by family members in Onalaska, Washington, approximately two weeks ago, said Iron County Sheriff's Lt. Del Schlosser.

"The family reported he was recently diagnosed with medical conditions related to memory loss," Schlosser said. "They had been tracking him through credit card receipts in northeast Utah and Arizona."

Tracy Feltner, the Water Conservancy employee who found the man, said he was performing routine checks at a water tank near 4600 West and 4400 North when he spotted a Jeep in the middle of a dirt road at approximately 8 a.m.

"I stopped and couldn't see anybody that needed assistance so I continued down the road about a mile and there was a man lying in the middle of the road with no shirt or shoes on," he said. "He was freezing and was possibly lying out there all night so I called 911."

Feltner had three extra coats in his truck that he used to warm the man up, and an ICSO deputy had a blanket that was also used until an ambulance could make it to the scene.

Schlosser said there is still no clear reason why the man was so far from home, but his family was grateful to have him found.

"We still don't know why he was out there," he said. "He didn't seem to be injured, but the ambulance reported his body temperature to be really low, so he was out there for some time. There were no mechanical problems found with the Jeep – its still a mystery."

The man was responsive, Feltner said, but could not make conversation.

"He was just moaning a lot," he said. "It was a sad deal. I am just happy we found him and were able to help the family with some closure. It's always terrible when someone close to you suffers from memory loss."

Schlosser said the man was taken to Valley View Medical Center (soon to be named Cedar City Hospital).