



National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

Grand Canyon National Park

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Grand Canyon News Release

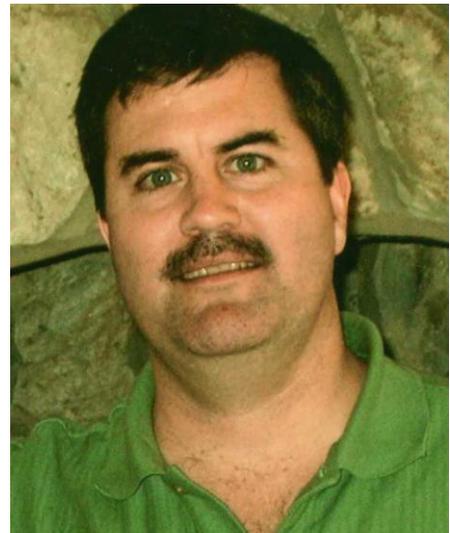
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Body Believed to be that of Andrew Brunelli Found in Grand Canyon National Park

Grand Canyon, Ariz. – At approximately 10:45 a.m. today, the body of a lone male was discovered outside of the initial Andrew Brunelli search zone by the park's helicopter. The body is believed to be that of 43 year-old Andrew Brunelli of Clayton, North Carolina.

National Park Service search and rescue personnel had been searching for Mr. Brunelli since September 5 when rangers received a report from the Coconino County Sheriff's Office that a man they were looking for might have planned to hike in Grand Canyon National Park. Shortly after receiving that report, rangers found a blue Hyundai Accent rented in Mr. Brunelli's name parked in the Grandview Point parking lot, and search efforts began in a search zone that included approximately 40 miles of trails plus associated routes, drainages and other appealing travelways in the Grandview-Hance area.



Andrew Brunelli.
Photo courtesy of Mr. Brunelli's family.

Search and rescue personnel defined their search zone based on the location of Mr. Brunelli's rental car, his past history of short to medium day hikes in the area and the lack of a backcountry permit indicating a longer itinerary. Additionally, initial investigations determined that Mr. Brunelli had not shared a specific itinerary with any of his immediate family and that he had not been seen since approximately 5:00 a.m. on August 31.

By this morning, all of the high-probability areas within the initial search zone had been searched and in many cases re-searched by ground crews, dog teams and technical ropes/canyoneering teams. As a result, ground search crews had begun to scale back operations in the area. At the same time, continuing efforts by investigators led to a co-worker that believed Mr. Brunelli's

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plans might have been a great deal more extensive than his past history in the park had indicated. This led search and rescue personnel to expand their search zone this morning.

With fewer ground search personnel to support, the park's helicopter was able to engage in aerial search operations beyond the original search zone. Helicopter crew members spotted the body in a drainage north of the Tonto Trail and approximately two miles east of the South Kaibab Trail in the vicinity of Pattie Butte.

The body was retrieved by helicopter via long-line operation (extended from a fixed line below the helicopter) and taken to the South Rim where it will be transferred to the Coconino County Medical Examiner.

The National Park Service would like to thank the local and national media, as well as local communities, that took an interest in this story and provided assistance in reaching out to the public for information about Mr. Brunelli.

The National Park Service is conducting an investigation into this incident and continues to work closely with the Coconino County Sheriff's Office.

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