A man missing since yesterday after a later afternoon walk was located this morning after spending the night in a wilderness area outside of St. Helens. Ross Williams went on a hike with his dog in rural South Columbia County, but didn't return when he was expected last night. The Columbia County Sheriff's Office activated its search and rescue unit in the effort to find the 72-year-old St. Helens-area man.

Before he was missing, Williams was last seen in the area of Smith Rd. and Dart Creek Rd. west of St. Helens around 5 p.m., Saturday afternoon. After he missed his rendezvous time with his wife at 6 p.m., deputies responding to the area on the missing person call requested the search and rescue team call-out.

Williams was accompanied by his Weimaraner dog, a large, gray canine named, "Crystal." Both man and dog are reported to be in good condition.

The sheriff's office received the initial missing adult call at 6:53 p.m., and the Search and Rescue Team was called out at 7:17 p.m. Around 9:30 pm. a phone alert was sent to area residents advising them of the search for the missing man. At approximately 1 a.m., the search was suspended until daybreak this morning. At daybreak the search was resumed. A member of the Sheriff's Office Search and Rescue team located the missing person in the wilderness a little after 10 a.m. today. A U.S. Coast Guard Helicopter had just arrived to assist in the search when the sheriff's office located the man and his dog.

"I'm very pleased with the effort put forth to find Mr. Williams," Sheriff Jeff Dickerson said. "Our Search and Rescue Team consists entirely of volunteers who are dedicated and well-trained in Search and Rescue disciplines. Using their training and experience, they tracked Mr. Williams and his dog until they located him out in the sticks.

"The dedication of these men and women to their craft was exemplified by their determination to locate Mr. Williams. One searcher remained in the area overnight with a deputy, and our

coordinator, who was attending training in Welches in Search and Rescue disciplines, responded to the scene this morning to join in the search."

Altogether, more than a dozen SAR Team volunteers aided in the search effort. Columbia River Fire & Rescue personnel also aided in the mission. A Canine tracking team from the SARCON conference in Welches was in route to help, and a local citizen on an ATV was also patroling the back roads to assist in the effort. The sheriff's office also relied heavily on the dispatching skills of the Columbia 911 dispatch center, which provided critical information and coordination service to responders in the field.

"This was a great success for our SAR team and demonstrated the coordination and collaboration possible on events such as this," Dickerson said. "I am extremely proud of all those volunteers and employees from my office who dedicated themselves to this successful mission."