

Minden snowmobiler dies in avalanche

By Kathryn Reed

A Minden man died March 2 after his snowmobile was buried in an avalanche in the Blue Lakes area off Highway 88.

Daniel Kuhner, 35, was riding with friends when the sleds triggered the avalanche that was about 150-foot-wide.

Because of the unstable snow his body could not be recovered until the following day. Kirkwood Ski Patrol used explosives to stabilize the area, which in turn triggered a second avalanche in the vicinity of the initial slide.

"Friends snowmobiling with the victim utilized their avalanche beacons, snow probes and shovels to locate and dig out the victim from beneath 3 to 4 feet of snow. The friends rode their snowmobiles back to the Blue Lakes Snow Park to report the incident and that the victim was obviously deceased," according to the Alpine County Sheriff's Office.

The avalanche occurred about 3:30pm March 2.

"The avalanche carried him down the slope and into trees. The slide buried the snowmobiler," according to the Sierra Avalanche Center.

This is the second avalanche death this month in the Sierra. A North Shore man died from injuries he sustained when he triggered an avalanche while skiing in the backcountry near Alpine Meadows.