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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
November 27, 2015

Search for Missing Skier Continues

Due to high avalanche danger and poor weather, opportunities to search for missing skier, Dr. Liam Walsh, have been limited. Walsh was last heard from at 1:34 pm on Sunday, Nov 22, at the Independence Mine Parking Lot at Hatcher Pass.

The Hatcher Pass road has been closed at the base of the canyon, (the "gateway") as of 2 pm on Saturday. This area will remain closed until further notice due to high avalanche danger and the inability to mitigate hazards due to weather. The road closure is also necessary to keep the area clear for *avalanche* mitigation work and officials who are continuing the search.

The Alaska State Troopers (AST) helicopter attempted to search for the missing skier on Wednesday but was turned around due to inclement weather. On Thursday, the AST helo conducted another search with Search and Rescue (SAR) and a HPAC avalanche forecaster. The search did not result in any clues as to his location. Up to *six feet* of new snow has blanketed the search area, covering old debris, and making the scene unsafe for a ground search.

Warm temperatures, significant new snow, and wind continue to contribute to increasing avalanche conditions. An avalanche cycle of this magnitude has not been seen at Hatcher Pass for more than a decade.

Currently, all agencies are formulating plans for next steps to continue with the search. Our condolences go out to the family and friends of Dr. Liam Walsh.

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