

Brian Laundrie manhunt: Fugitive's father to join search at Carlton Reserve, lawyer says

Florida fugitive Brian Laundrie's attorney said Wednesday that Christopher Laundrie would begin assisting authorities in the search for his son – who was last seen on Sept. 13, just days after his fiancée Gabby Petito officially became a missing person.

The FBI later uncovered Petito's remains at a remote Wyoming campsite on Sept. 19.

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"Chris Laundrie was asked to assist law enforcement in their search for Brian at the preserve today," Steve Bertolino, the family's attorney, told Fox News Wednesday night. "Since the preserve has been closed to the public, Chris has not been able to look for Brian in the only place Chris and Roberta believe Brian may be."

GABBY PETITO HOMICIDE: TIMELINE OF DISAPPEARANCE WITH BRIAN LAUNDRIE

(Fox News)

He added that North Port police "had to postpone" the elder's Laundrie's participation and that he did not take part in the search Wednesday, which saw an increased police presence after resources appeared to have been drawn down over the weekend.

"Chris and Roberta are hopeful there will be another opportunity to assist," he added, referring to both of Brian Laundrie's parents.

Josh Taylor, the North Port Police Department's chief spokesman, told Fox News that his department did not ask for Chris Laundrie's involvement – nor did police "postpone" it.

"In no world would we be the agency asking the family to help search in an FBI led investigation," he said, deferring further questions to the FBI.

And Pat Diaz, a former Miami-Dade homicide detective who also served on FBI task forces, said he

doubted federal investigators would bring in a suspect's father to help their search.

"They may have found stuff in the reserve for the father to identify," he said. "Not a body, but belongings."

BRIAN LAUNDRIE SHOULD SURRENDER, FORMER FUGITIVE SAYS

But Bertolino told Newsday earlier that Chris Laundrie was "excited" to take part in the search – after weeks of remaining completely mum on the subject and barely leaving his home.

He also claimed that the elder Laundrie searched the T. Mabry Carlton Jr. Reserve on his own on Monday, Sept. 13 after his son failed to come home that night – even though the parents told police that Friday that they had last seen their son on Tuesday, according to the paper.

BRIAN LAUNDRIE'S SURVIVALIST SKILLS ARE 'MEDIocre,' SAYS SISTER CASSIE

"The North Port police informed me that they were focusing on certain areas of the preserve today and they were actually hoping that Mr. Laundrie could join them on that search," Bertolino told the newspaper. "Mr. Laundrie has consented and we are waiting for the call from the North Port Police Department to make that happen."

Brian Laundrie had been named a person of interest in Petito's disappearance days before authorities found her dead. On Sept. 23, the FBI announced a federal warrant for bank fraud charges after he allegedly used someone else's debit card without authorization for more than \$1,000.