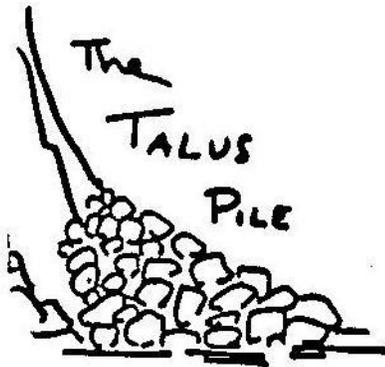


NUMBER 151
January 2012



CHINA LAKE MOUNTAIN RESCUE GROUP

P. O. BOX 2037
RIDGECREST CA 93556

TRAINING SCHEDULE

Jan	9	First Aid Pre-Meeting Sudden Illness	Finco
Jan	9	Meeting	Finco, Stratton, Loughran
Jan	13	Tracking	Huey
Jan	14	Black Mountain	Finco
Jan	21	Telescope Peak	Huey
Feb	TBD	First Aid Scenario	Loughran
Feb	3-5	Mt. Whitney	Huey
Feb	13	Meeting	Derkey, Niesen
Feb	18	Winter Recert Training	Bishop
Feb	25	Winter Recert Training	Bishop
Mar	2-5	Winter Recert June Lake	Derkey
Mar	12	Meeting	Rockwell
Mar	24	Wildrose	Finco
Apr	9	Meeting	C. Burge, Hueber
Apr	TBD	CPR	Finco
Apr	TBD	Stretcher Practice	Loughran

For TBD dates contact Eileen Loughran at Eileen.Loughran@clmrg.org

SCREE

If you are receiving the Talus Pile via the US mail and you want to go GREEN, we can email you the Talus Pile, or you can check it out on our web page at <http://www.clmrg.org/>
Contact Linda Finco with your email address at fincolj@aol.com with your GREEN request.

Editor's note: In the September 2011 Talus Pile, Operations 5-10 were preceded by 2010. This of course was an error since these operations took place in 2011.



CLMRG is funded in part by United Way of Indian Wells Valley.

OPERATION REPORTS

Operation 2011-011 (Alert)

13 September 2011

Twin Peaks (San Bernardino County)

By Dan Bishop

Summary:

Alert for a missing 8 year old child.

Narrative:

On Wednesday, 13 September, I accepted the operation for a search of a missing 8 year old child. The child wandered from his preschool in Twin Lakes (west of Lake Arrowhead). The San Bernardino Sheriff requested additional resources since the young man had now been missing for over 24 hours which included spending a night out during a severe thunderstorm. This search was further complicated due to the fact that the subject is severely autistic and will actively avoid searchers.

Terry Mitchell agreed to coordinate and I asked for a 1500 meet time to facilitate an 1800 brief in Twin Peaks. Our assignment was to be an overnight search team from 1800 to 0600. Linda Finco, Dave Miles, Tom Roseman, Tom Sakai, Bob Huey and Bill Stratton all committed. Just prior to arriving at the hut I received word that the child had been found in good condition hiding in some brush approximately 1.5 miles northwest of the preschool. Most of the team had assembled at the hut and started to assemble gear. After a quick debrief the team was released.

Operation 2011-12 (Rescue)

OES #2011-LAW-0295

17 September 2011

Lone Pine Lake (Inyo County)

By Tom Roseman

Summary:

A 64 year old man summited Mt. Whitney and during the descent experienced increasing back pain which prevented him from continuing down.

Narrative:

Inyo County Sheriff Deputy Tim Winkler contacted CLMRG around 3AM, September 17th. He was requesting our assistance in a carry out in the vicinity of Lone Pine Lake. Terry Mitchell coordinated the callout with the assistance of Gina Najera-Niesen. Dan Bishop, Tom Sakai, Tom Roseman, and Mike Derkey committed to the operation. Members were told to meet at the hut at 5AM. We arrived at Whitney Portal just after 7AM. Dan Rothrock, (64 years old), had summited Mt. Whitney and experienced increasing back pain as he was descending the trail. He reached the point where he could go no further and bivied on the trail near the intersection of Lone Pine Lake. His partners continued down and reported the situation. Inyo team members located the subject and were soon joined by Bishop and Derkey. The medical assessment showed severe muscle cramping in the subject's back. The overnight rest had helped relieve his pain and he chose to continue hiking down. Sakai and Roseman met with the descending group just below Lone Pine Lake. About halfway down the subject was showing signs of increasing back pain and was resting more often. We decided to place him in the stretcher, with his concurrence, for the rest of the trip down. We reached the Portal around 11:30AM. We debriefed and had lunch at the Portal store and then headed home, arriving at our hut around 3PM that day.

Operation 2011-13 (Search)

OES #2011-LAW-0310

30 September – 2 October 2011

Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Park

By Mike Myers

Summary:

A 67 year old man was 5 days overdue from a 100 mile loop trip in the Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Park.

Narrative:

Mike Myers received a call from Kern County Sheriff Ken Smith at 2000 on September 30th. Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Park was requesting Type 1 search teams who could operate for 2 to 3 days at elevations ranging from 7000 to 13000 feet. The missing hiker, John Williams, was 5 days overdue from a 14 day hike, doing a 100 mile loop through the two national parks. The subject was a former member of the Inyo County Search and Rescue Team. The subject's intended route was: South Lake – Bishop Pass – Dusy Basin – LeConte Canyon – Simpson Meadow – Tehipite, Blue Canyon – then cross country to the John Muir Trail (JMT) via Martha Lake – JMT – Evolution Lake – then exit back over Bishop Pass. Terry Mitchell coordinated the callout and Myers, Dan Bishop and Tom Sakai committed to the search.

Due to Park policy, a park ranger had to accompany each field team, so each member of CLMRG was teamed up with a park ranger to create 2-man field teams. We were flown from the southern entrance to Sequoia to the northwest corner of Kings Canyon into an area near Kettle and Tehipite Domes and Blue Canyon. Each team was assigned to cover different sections of trail in search of evidence/clues. Bishop and Ranger Morgan started at Hay Meadow and searched south past Tehipite Dome and along the Middle Fork of the Kings River on to the outlet of Blue Canyon. Myers and Ranger Roxanne started at Big Meadow and searched south through Blue Canyon, then up to the south of Kettle Dome. Sakai and Ranger Chris started at Hay Meadow and searched west and north, following the trail well outside the Park, then continuing back into the Park until meeting up with Myers at 1800. These two teams decided to make camp together which would give the Incident Command (IC) greater options for search assignments for day 2. Meanwhile Bishop's team had little or no radio communication while in the valley. They made camp along the Kings River at the first spot where radio communication was established. At the end of day 1 all teams were notified to secure for the night and be prepared for a 0800 radio brief the next morning.

At 0800 on day 2, the IC broadcast that the subject had been located and was alive and well. We were asked to locate the nearest landing zone (LZ) for helo pickup. The nearest LZ for the Myers/Sakai teams camped near the base of Kettle Dome was 4 to 5 miles west in a cow camp meadow which was outside the Park and on private property. Since the Park was no longer in an emergency status, helicopters were not permitted to land anywhere outside the Park. Unfortunately, that made the nearest LZ about 9 miles to the south. We packed up and headed to the LZ which took 4 hours to reach. After a 1 hour wait, a helo came in and extracted the two teams of two and flew us back to the Ash Mountain Fire Base in southern Sequoia. Bishop and his team met up with a dog team whose assignment was to search west along the Kings River. Their nearest suitable LZ was back below Tehipite Dome. It took a couple hours to reach and all four along with the dog were extracted.

During our debrief we learned the subject had taken a detour from his intended route when he knew he was going to be overdue. Once he reached the JMT, he headed north and exited via Piute Pass instead of returning to Dusy Basin and exiting Bishop Pass. Once out, he made his way home where his wife informed him that there were a lot of people searching for him. Following the debrief, we secured and headed home, arriving back the hut at 1800.

Operation 2010-14 (Rescue/Recovery)

5-6 October 2011

Mt. Whitney Trail (Inyo County)

By Dan Bishop

Summary:

It was reported a 65 year old man became increasingly ill while descending from Trail Camp in deteriorating weather conditions. One climbing partner was left with him in a bivy shelter somewhere in the vicinity of Mirror Lake while the others descended to report the problem.

Narrative:

Dan Bishop received the call from Inyo Sheriff Deputy Tim Winkler at 7PM on October 5th requesting assistance for a carryout of a subject from Mirror Lake on the Whitney Trail. Reports stated that the subject, Petr Bursik, became increasingly ill while descending from Trail Camp earlier that day in deteriorating weather conditions. Mr. Brusik, who had climbed Whitney 12 years ago, came to the point where he could not continue. Initial information reported from his two partners who hiked out stated that the subject along with the third companion (Johan, who stayed behind) was near Mirror Lake and that Mr. Bursik was in and out of consciousness.

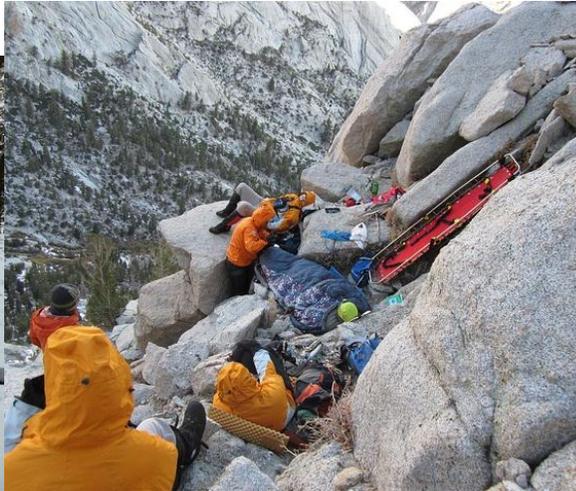
Gina Niesen, agreed to be a coordinator, and started the callout. Bob Huey, Tom Roseman, Tom Sakai, Linda Finco, and Mike Derkey committed. Arriving after 10PM at the Portals we found 30 degree temperatures, fresh snow and only one vehicle in the parking lot. As we were getting ready two Inyo members, Matt and Joe, arrived. Loading gear we took 4 oxygen bottles, first aid kit, victim sleeping bag, ground pad, and a tarp along with individual bivy bags, just in case. There was a stretcher and wheel already in place at Outpost Camp. A hasty team consisting of the two Inyo members, Derkey and Bishop were dispatched to head up the trail. Inyo team member Matt was designated as the lead for medical. The snow became deeper as we ascended. Breaking trail we encountered 2 foot drifts and gusty winds which were blowing spindrift as we approached Big Horn Park.

We reached the stretcher at 1AM. Matt and Derkey were sent ahead while Joe and Bishop followed with the stretcher. It was soon discovered that the subject was not at Mirror Lake. We regrouped while Huey and Roseman arrived at our location just above the lake. Around 2AM, Inyo Sheriff Corporal Waterbury made radio contact from the Portals to serve as Command Post (CP). From their position at Outpost camp, Finco and Sakai were the only ones able to communicate with base camp, so they became the radio relay from their position. At this time a yell was heard in the distance from above. Huey and Joe stayed with the stretcher, while Matt, Roseman, Derkey and Bishop continued on breaking trail in 3 foot drifts above Mirror Lake. Topping out around 5AM, the subject's partner was soon spotted where the stream first crosses the trail above Mirror Lake.

The subject and his partner, Johan, had made a shelter under a tarp. Their location was exposed to the full force of the wind and spindrift blowing down the slope. We quickly moved them to a more sheltered location about 10 feet away where we placed Mr. Bursik on a ground insulating pad, and put him in two sleeping bags. We then wrapped him in a tarp and covered his head with a warm hat. Our initial assessment indicated his condition was very critical, in fact, too critical to attempt a carryout. We began administering oxygen while Finco relayed the information on to Corporal Waterbury, who then requested a helicopter to assist. Despite our efforts to oxygenate, warm and comfort him, his vitals continued to decline. We checked Johan for injuries. Being from the Czech Republic, he had very limited English skills, but we determined that although cold, he was in good condition. We gave him hot tea and food and supplemented his sleeping bag with an emergency bivy bag. Once daylight arrived Bishop sent Johan down the trail, accompanied by Roseman, Joe, and Sakai, rather than rely on a helicopter evacuation. Around 9AM we received word from Deputy Winkler, who had taken over for Corporal Waterberry at the CP, that a CHP helo was enroute and would to land and attempt an extraction of Mr. Bursik. Matt, Derkey, Huey and Bishop along with additional day hikers (who had stopped their climb to render assistance) moved Mr. Bursik to a possible landing zone. The CHP helo soon arrived and despite 10-15 mph winds found a small spot to land and shutdown. Again, with everyone's help we loaded him onboard and the helo was airborne by 10AM where he was transported to Lone Pine and officially pronounced dead by the Inyo County Coroner. At this time we had direct communication with the Command Post and were able to release Finco from her radio relay duty. Descending was uneventful. Derkey and Bishop returned the stretcher to Outpost Camp and we all met up at the Portals. After a debrief at the Inyo Sheriff substation we returned to Ridgecrest. Despite the outcome, this was an excellent example of the entire team working together to work through problems, overcoming issues, and improvising in harsh overnight conditions.



Operation 2011-14: Snow at Outpost Camp



Operation 2011-15: Waiting for the helo

Operation 2011-15 (Rescue)

OES#2011-LAW-0239

15-16 October 2011

Lone Pine Peak (Inyo County)

By Dan Bishop

Summary:

Andrew Swain and his climbing partner were attempting the north ridge of Lone Pine Peak. Encountering snow and ice part way through the route they backed off and were descending when Mr. Swain fell, unroped, approximately 20 feet, scraping his fingers and causing a fracture of his left ankle.

Narrative:

On October 5th at around 1645 Inyo County requested our assistance for a rescue of a 40 year old subject from Lone Pine Peak. Initially no Operations Leader could commit, so Linda Finco, who was out of town, took the information. Once back in cell phone contact and upon receiving the messages, I contacted Sgt. Baldwin and Finco to accept the operation at 1715. Terry Mitchell started the callout and only Bob Huey and Bill Stratton would commit. Dave Miles, also initially out of communication, later committed. We agreed to a 1915 muster at the hut.

The subject, Andrew Swain, originally from Wales, UK, was attempting the north ridge of Lone Pine Peak with his partner Julian Wixson. Upon encountering snow and ice part way through the route they backed off and were descending when Mr. Swain fell, unroped, approximately 20 feet at 1500. A 'chicken head' had broken off the face and caused Mr. Swain to slide down a slab, scraping his fingers and causing a fracture of his left ankle.

We met with Cpl. Waterbury at the Meysan Trailhead on the Portals Road at 2030. He informed us that he had 3 Inyo members on the trail, however two of them were returning and only one, Matt, was continuing on to the subject. Matt had seen the subjects' head lamps and was heading directly to them, crossing the stream below the normal route of ascending to Lower Meysan Lake and traversing toward the base of the climb. We waited until Matt reached and assessed the situation. After solo ascending a more difficult chute (class 5+), Matt informed us that the subject had an unstable fracture and was non-ambulatory. He also recommended a helicopter extraction via a hoist or long line due to the steep terrain at the subject's location. The four of us started up at 2245 with the Inyo two wheel in-line stretcher, one 9mm rope (we were to utilize the subject's rope and gear), personal hardware gear, stove, and extra food.

Progress was slow as we ascended with the heavy stretcher. We met the two Inyo members as they were descending and soon reached the point where they had left additional gear for the victim (sleeping bag, pad, and parka) for us to take up. Although Cpl. Waterbury was working on trying to get a helicopter with hoisting capability, the alternative would be a manual extraction down a steep technical section followed by a tedious

evacuation off trail down to the trailhead. I had cell coverage and used Huey's phone to contact Mitchell and Sgt. Baldwin about additional resources. This was being worked as we approached the flat spot prior to Lower Meysan Lake and the stream crossing at 0200. I had been feeling ill all evening and suggested we take a break since Miles, Huey and Stratton were doing most of the stretcher hauling. Matt had been tracking our progress from his position. He confirmed that he had stabilized Mr. Swain and that all were in good condition and a hasty team with supplemental gear was not needed immediately. Our short break turned into a well needed 2 hour rest. We continued on, crossing the stream and struggling across rough terrain to find the start of the route. Leaving the wheel at base of the route, Miles carried the stretcher up the loose chute to the location at 10400 feet where we met with Matt and the subjects at 0600.

Matt did a great job of splinting Mr. Swain's ankle and packaging him on a ledge at the location of the fall. We noted that if Mr. Swain had bounced from his impact point another 6 feet he would have fallen an additional 80 feet, he was very fortunate. Matt did inform us that although the ankle was stabilized it was a compound fracture. We provide the group with additional clothing, a sleeping bag, food, and hot beverages via the stove we had brought. At this time Cpl. Waterbury informed us that an Army Reserve Chinook from Stockton was scheduled to arrive at 1100. He also said that no further ground support would be available in the case that a manual extraction would become necessary. We spent the next few hours preparing for the hoist extraction of Mr. Swain. He and his partner, Mr. Wixson, had a very good attitude which made the wait enjoyable. At 1130 the helicopter arrived. I vectored them to our position, informed them of the ankle injury and assisted them in positioning the hoist. Our location on the ridge proved to be a challenging problem, but they were able to lower the hoist to Mr. Swain's exact location without us having to move him. Hooking him into his harness, a cable swing brought him in slight contact with the face that he had fallen as he was being raised. Once he was safely in the helo, I requested further extraction of the rescue team. Unfortunately, due to the difficulty of our location, further hoist extraction would not be possible. The Helo crew informed me that they could not find a suitable landing spot and they would have to return to Lone Pine Airport. We packed up and descended via Matt's ascent route and quickly reached the Meysan trail at 1245. Back to the trail head at 1330 we were treated to lunch in Lone Pine by the Inyo County Sheriff Department and returned to Ridgecrest at 1630.

We later learned that Mr. Swain's injury was exacerbated by the hoisting and by the time he reached Lone Pine his ankle bandage was soaked in blood. Once stabilized at the Lone Pine Hospital, he was then transported to Loma Linda to undergo surgery. A manual extraction would most likely have resulted in a similar condition except we would have been hours from advanced medical care rather than minutes.

Operation 2011-16 (Search)

OES#2011-LAW-0232

29 October 2011

Foothills east of Mt. Humphreys (Inyo County)

By Mike Franklin

Summary:

In July, the Forest Service found and ticketed an apparently abandoned vehicle in the Buttermilk area near Bishop. The vehicle was still there in October, and the Inyo County Sheriff Department was notified.

Narrative:

The Inyo County Sheriff requested assistance from CLMRG in the search for a missing person. In July, the Forest Service found and ticketed an apparently abandoned vehicle in the Buttermilk area near Bishop. The vehicle was still there in October, and the Inyo County Sheriff Department was notified. The sheriff investigated and noted there was no recent sign of anyone disturbing the vehicle or camp site. The subject's money and ID were all present at the site. Searching the area with a scent dog, the dog "hit" on the water at a nearby stream, but no other evidence was found. The subject's ex-wife was contacted and she reported that she had not seen or heard from him during that time period. The subject had a history of heart problems, including a pacemaker.

Participating members (Mike Franklin, Mike Myers, Bob Rockwell, Mike Derkey, TJ Dobson, Dave Miles, Debbie Breitenstein, Bill Stratton and Nathan Simons) assembled at the hut at 5:30 AM on October 29th. Dan

Bishop acted as the coordinator. We arrived at Inyo's hut shortly after 8AM. The subject's computer, which had been found in his vehicle, contained a GPS history of the hikes he had taken. The pattern indicated by this data enabled us to determine in which areas the subject was more likely to be found.

CLMRG members, Inyo sheriff Cpl. Waterbury and two members of Inyo's team, drove as close as possible to the area to be searched. This location was a short distance west from where the subject's vehicle was found. Franklin, due to health problems, stayed with the explorer and acted as base along with Cpl. Waterbury. Miles Stratton searched a drainage east of base, to investigate the stream where earlier a scent dog had "hit." They were picked up downstream by Cpl. Waterbury and driven back to base, where they began a second assignment, searching a steep drainage to the west. The other members, in teams of two, searched drainages and ridges to the west and southwest. Various objects were found, mostly trash, along with some decayed articles of clothing, and some bones. However, nothing could be definitely tied to the subject. After enjoying dinner courtesy of the Inyo County Sheriff, we drove home and arrived at the hut at 9:30 PM.

Operation 2011-17 (Search/Rescue)

OES#2011-LAW-0352

10-11 November 2011

Death Valley National Park

By Dave Miles

Summary:

A search for five overdue hikers in Death Valley.

Narrative:

On Thursday November 10, 2011 at 2037 I received a call from Tim Winkler of Inyo County. He needed three (3) rescuers from CLMRG to help with a search for 5 missing hikers (4 male, 1 female) that were supposed to have exited via Surprise Canyon. They had started from Mahogany Flat on Tuesday the 8th. Terry Mitchell was the coordinator and Janet Westbrook helped with the calling. Tom Sakai and Jeff Green committed to the search. We needed to be at Stovepipe Wells Command Post (CP) at 0700, so we planned to meet at 0500. Janet said that Bob Joy had hiked Telescope Peak with a group on Tuesday. After talking with Bob Joy and Kevin Rooney, who had talked with the hikers Tuesday, I let Winkler know that the five hikers were planning on being out more than one night. He confirmed with the RP that they were overdue.

We met at the hut at 0500 Friday November 11th. We loaded equipment for a technical rescue and started for Stovepipe Wells. Just short of the junction to Wildrose Canyon we found 2 hikers with large packs waving us down on the road. These were 2 of the missing hikers. Josh and Brendan said they left the other three to get help and had hiked out of the canyon and then North to Ballarat during the night. We attempted a 911 call and to use the satellite phone to contact the CP, but were unable. We decided to take them with us to the CP and hurried on our way. A few miles down the road we passed a Park Ranger (Ryan) and signaled him to stop. Ryan was able to call on his radio to let the CP know we had found two of the hikers. We then turned around and headed back to find the canyon that Josh and Brendan had exited.

What they thought was Ballarat was Indian Ranch. They had exited a few small canyons south of Hall Canyon. They agreed to hike back with us to where the others were. At 0700 we left a radio with Ryan and started hiking to the canyon. We also used their tracks to confirm that we had the same canyon they exited in the dark. They Inyo team arrive at Indian Ranch just as we entered the narrows of the canyon. Shortly afterwards the China Lake SAR helicopter arrived overhead and began to search ahead in the canyon. They spotted a fire and then the hikers and dropped off a crew member to begin extraction. After climbing up three dry falls, we came around the corner just in time to watch the helicopter finish the extraction and fly back to Indian Ranch. After confirming there was no gear left behind, we started the hike back. At 0910 we were back at the Indian Ranch CP where the other 3 hikers (Audrey, James, Clayton) had a joyful reunion with Josh and Brendan. After completing some forms and a quick debrief, we went with Ryan to shuttle the 5 hikers to the vehicle that had been left for them in Surprise Canyon. We then returned to the hut and secured at 1140.

Operation 2011-18 (Rescue)

OES#2011-LAW-0362

20-21 November 2011

Mt. Whitney (Inyo County)

By Dave Miles

Summary:

Three (3) missing hikers on the Mt. Whitney trail.

Narrative:

On Sunday November 20, 2011 at 1520 I received a call from Sgt. Mark Baldwin. Inyo County was requesting our help to look for three (3) missing hikers on the Mt. Whitney Trail. We were to be in Lone Pine at 0700 the next morning. Sheila Rockwell coordinated the callout and Mary Schmierer helped call. Mike Myers, Dan Bishop, Tom Sakai, and Daryl Hinman committed to the search. I called Tim Winkler for details. The three hikers (all in their late 20's or early 30's) had attempted to day hike Mt. Whitney on Saturday. One of the hikers made a call to his mother at 0300 and again at 0812 on Sunday and requested a rescue. They could not find the trail during the night Saturday, and they were in whiteout conditions on Sunday. They reported their position as Trail Camp. Winkler also said that the helicopter would be arriving at 1000 so we should be in Lone Pine at 0830.

We met at the hut at 0700 Monday. With day hikers spending 2 nights in fresh snow, we took hypothermia and avalanche gear. We arrived in Lone Pine at 0830 and were briefed and assigned to teams. Three teams would be dropped off by the Chinook at Trail Camp. Each team was to clear their route and make their way down to Whitney Portal for pickup. We proceeded to the Lone Pine airport and prepared for the helicopter. There were three duffel bags with hypothermia gear for the hikers that would be dropped off by the Chinook if required. Clear skies made this the fastest way to get the gear to the team that found the hikers.

We lifted off at 1150. On the way to Trail Camp the three hikers were spotted on the move from their shelter at Consultation Lake. The Chinook made a few passes to clear a landing spot and then we landed and picked up the three hikers. They were cold and tired but uninjured. They had dug the snow out from under a boulder and built a snow wall. We returned to the Lone Pine Airport. The hikers were evaluated by the two ambulance crews and released. We had lunch with the Inyo SAR team and then returned to the hut at 1500.

Operation 2011-19 (Search/Rescue)

OES#2011-LAW-0369

3 December 2011

Homewood Canyon (Inyo County)

By Dave Miles

Summary:

It was reported a hunter had fallen in Homewood Canyon and was injured and could not hike out.

Narrative:

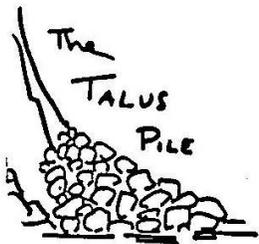
On December 3, 2011 at 1116 I received a call from Inyo Deputy Tim Winkler requesting us to respond as soon as possible to a report of a fallen hunter in Homewood Canyon. He said he would call CalEMA to get the official request in motion. I decided that the CallingPost system would be the fastest way to find a coordinator and could alert everyone to start getting to the hut. At 1127, within seconds of finishing the CallingPost message, both of my phones rang. Janet Westbrook agreed to coordinate. Several more coordinators called me just afterwards. Mary Schmierer assisted with the calling. I got the official call from Sgt. Ken Smith just before 1200. Bob Huey, Jeff Green, and I met at the hut at 1200 and left at 1210. We took technical rescue gear and a litter with the wheel in anticipation of having to carry out the 240 lb subject. I called Janet just before we lost cell service to let her know that Huey had a Verizon cell phone that might work as we went through Trona. She said

that Mike Myers and Bob Rockwell were on a hike in Nine Mile canyon and could be available. I said that more rescuers would be very helpful for a carryout.

At 1250 we arrived at Homewood Canyon and found an ambulance but no crew. We searched the immediate area and up the canyon and then using the satellite phone we contacted Tim Winkler who now had coordinates and the frequency the crew was using (CALCORD). We made our way over to Bruce Canyon to the north and found a fire truck and a pickup blocking the road. We exited the vehicle and started towards the coordinates. Establishing radio communication with the fire and ambulance crew we tried to confirm their coordinates, but they did not have a GPS. Around 1430, we made visual contact with the crew and the subject (Derk) coming out of a canyon north of Bruce Canyon.

Around the same time we got a radio call from Dan Bishop who had left Ridgecrest with Myers and Rockwell. I instructed them to start up the road to our location. We also were able to contact the China Lake SAR helo. They did not have CALCORD. Fortunately, we had a coordination meeting with VX-31 SAR a few years ago and had programmed their air-to-ground frequency in our radios. They also had been given the wrong coordinates and were searching the east side of the valley. After telling them we were on the west side we then flashed them with a signal mirror to give them our position. We relayed to the helicopter that the subject was now walking out. We were back to our vehicles at 1510.

I debriefed the subjects, Derk, John, and Randy to get some details. Derk's injury occurred when he fell at around 0800 that morning and suffered a shoulder dislocation. John had hiked out to make the 911 call, while Randy stayed with Derk. They had also activated their SPOT beacon but it was never received. Liberty Ambulance had received the call at 1000. While the ambulance and fire crew were placing him on a backboard the subject's shoulder reduced thus enabling him to walk out on his own. Once back at the vehicles Derk stated that he was feeling fine and agreed to follow up with his doctor since this was not the first time he had suffered from this injury. We had a quick debrief with our team and put group gear in the Explorer. Rockwell, Myers, and Bishop returned to the Caltrans parking lot to pick up their cars. Huey went home and Green dropped me off to pickup my car and then went to the hut and put all the group gear away. I met with Winkler at 1630 to give him the debrief.



China Lake Mountain Rescue Group
P. O. Box 2037
Ridgecrest CA 93556

Address Correction Requested

