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**CHINA LAKE MOUNTAIN
RESCUE GROUP**

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SCREE

See our web page at clmrg.org. and clmrg.org/members

Also the California Region's web page at crmra.org.

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Annual MRA Reaccreditation – Technical Rock Skills with First Aid

2022-MRA MRA TECHNICAL ROCK ACCREDITATION San Bernardino/Joshua Tree Swanson

The China Lake Mountain Rescue Group (CLMRG) completed the 2022 Technical Rock Reaccreditation at Joshua Tree National Park on March 5, 2022. As members of the Mountain Rescue Association (MRA) the California Region of the MRA conducts yearly, rotating accreditations in the areas of high-angle Technical Rock, Search Management, and Snow/Ice Rescue. The CLMRG Team consisting of Luke Swanson, Dave Miles, Linda Finco, Nathan Simons, Tom Roseman, Nick Pio, Andrew Cammenga, Bill Stephenson, Christian Aranda, Katie Kempema, Joe Kromphardt, Phil Cash, Tyler Brewer, and Dave Jensen met at the Hut at noon on Friday March 4 and drove to Joshua Tree to an Air B&B close to the park and checked in at the command post that evening.

On Saturday morning, the Team arrived at the command post and breakfast truck located at Indian Cove, operated by the MRA host team, San Bernardino. Each team provided their own subject for the scenario. The CLMRG subject, Tyler Brewer, went to the subject briefing at 0800 and was subsequently directed to his location for the scenario. The CLMRG Team Leader, Luke Swanson and team proctors (Simons and Roseman) attended their respective briefings at 0830. Steve Goldsworthy, from Montrose, and David Sperling, from West Valley, were assigned as proctors for CLMRG.

The Team met near our parked vehicles with the two proctors to begin the scenario. We were provided with the

subject's location and were instructed to talk to the division supervisor on the way for further instruction/direction. We left the vehicles around 1000, the specified start time. The division supervisor expected that we would already have information on the scenario (i.e. subject's injury, reporting party, etc.), however this information had not been provided to either the proctors or our team leader. We were instructed that it was a leg injury, but received no additional information. We proceeded to the subject's location.

Upon arriving, Phil Cash began assessing the subject as the first aid lead. The Team formulated our plan to lower the subject from his location. Each member proceeded with our planned roles. It soon became clear that space would be very limited as two additional teams were assigned scenarios very close by. Fortunately, we arrived early enough to use the anchors we wanted. Miles and Pio were edge attendants, while Miles also acted as the technical lead/safety. System team 1 included Finco and Aranda and system team 2 was Stephenson and Krompardt. Kempema assisted with first aid, and then joined system team 1. After lowering some distance, we were instructed to switch to a raise, which we completed with our Aztecs for each system team. Swanson assisted system team 2, so that each raising team had three people. The team then switched back to lowering. The scenario ended when the subject reached the ground, which was around noon.

The Team met with our proctors to debrief where it was learned that CLMRG had successfully passed the accreditation. Areas of improvement were discussed including attendant tie-in, use of Clutch (braking device) in tandem on the raising, as well as use of the Aztec for the raising were a few issues that were discussed. The Team regrouped with Simons and Roseman and after stopping for dinner in 29 Palms secured at the Hut at 1900.

2022 Operations to date

2022-01 RESCUE Kern / Frasier Park, Nordic Base, Mt. Pinos Simons

At 2111 on February 16, 2022, an alert was sent out on the Callout system by Linda Finco for a search for a lost 73-year-old hiker, Gab Song, on Mount Pinos in the Frasier Park area. Nathan Paul Simons responded as leader, with Carin Miles as coordinator and Eileen Loughran as telephoner. David Jensen committed, and we set a meet time of 0630 at the CLMRG Hut on February 17.

At the Hut, Dave and Nathan packed gear for Winter travel and possible scouting of ravines (a half nine, light rack, helmets and harnesses, crampons, ice axe, snowshoes, etc). We then left the hut at 0645 and arrived at the command post at Nordic Base at 0955.

We were briefed by Kern County Sheriff SGT McNeill that Mr. Song had been day hiking on February 16 and reported missing that evening. Our Team was told to prepare for helicopter insertion to Mount Pinos to then hike over to three likely spots in chutes and investigate. Once we had prepared, we were inserted via helicopter then waited for the rest of our search team since we had to be split because of helicopter capacity. While our whole team was organizing and getting oriented, there was radio traffic from another search team concerning the Subject. The Command Post instructed us to hold position and wait for further instruction.

It turns out the Subject had spent a night out with other campers and hiked himself out and met a motorized team, suffering no injuries. We then waited for the helicopter to return and extract us where we then dropped off our gear and debriefed. We drove home and were secure by 1711 the same day.

2022-02 SEARCH San Luis Obispo/Lake Nacimiento Simons

On March 8, 2022 at 1649, Linda Finco sent an alert over the Callout system for a mutual aid request in San Luis Obispo county on a search for a 31 year old At-Risk individual, Clayton Edef, who walked away from his house down a creek bed, near Lake Nacimiento. Nathan Paul Simons answered as Operation Leader, with Carin Miles as Coordinator and Eileen Loughran as Telephoner. Linda Finco and Bill Stephenson committed to go on the search.

We met at the CLMRG Hut at 0430, loaded gear for ground searching (radios, inReach, GPS, FAK) and left the hut for CP at 0433. We arrived at the CP for assignments at 0854 and were given an assignment where we would be inserted via boat to search area around Lake Nacimiento

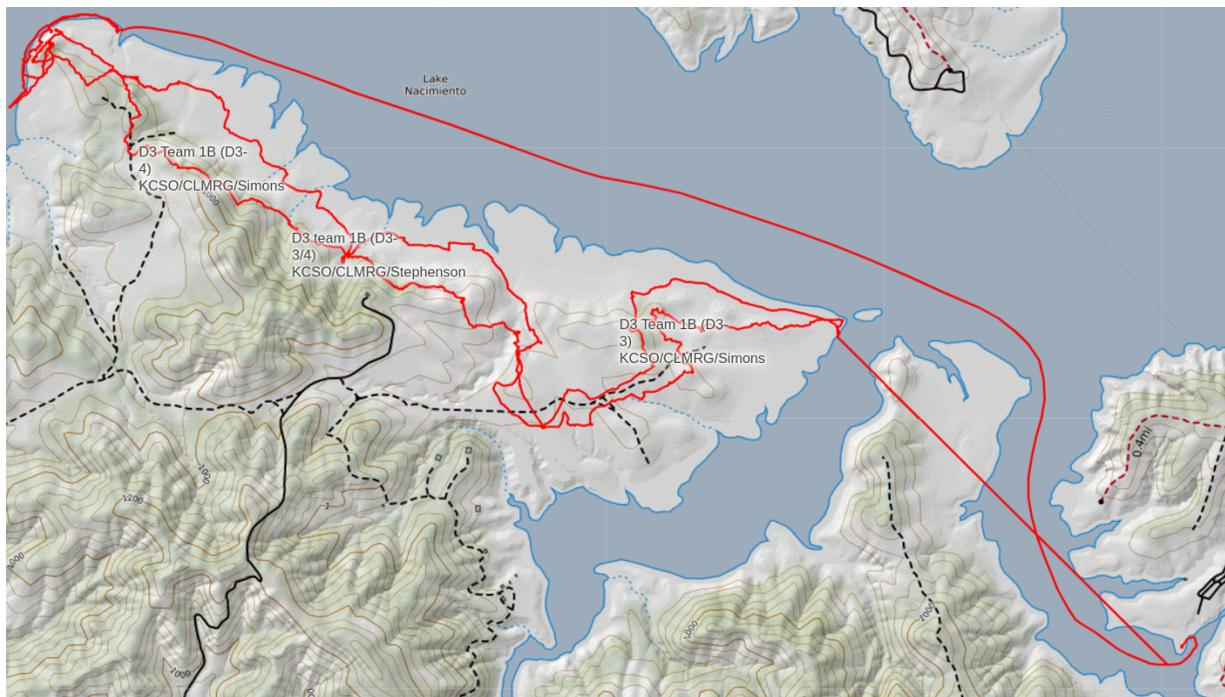
Once we were dropped off by a boat operated by the Park Service, we commenced searching our assigned area, D3-3 (for operational period 3, area 3). We came across a fence which we weren't sure was marking private property, so radioed in for further direction. Once our position was clear at CP (via SARTopo - cell coverage was good), we were instructed to continue to search area D3-4.

We encountered cattle and wild pigs among greenery, but there was relatively little brush to bushwhack through making for a very long line of sight between searchers, and we covered much ground easily. We were finished with our assignment by 1322. We radioed for further instructions and were told to meet the boat for extraction.

We got a boat ride back to the dock, then drove back to CP where we had a quick debrief, then joined SGT Kimmel and other KCSO teams for lunch.

We then drove home and were done with the operation by 1935. As of this time the Subject still remains missing.

map of our tracks.



2022-03 Alert San Bernardino County/Angelus Oaks Simons

On March 14, 2022, at 1440, Linda Finco sent out an Alert over the Callout system for a mutual aid search for a missing 57 year old retired law enforcement officer in the Angelus Oaks area in San Bernardino County. Nathan Paul Simons responded as leader, with Carin Miles as Coordinator and Terry Mitchell as Telephoner. Nick Pio, Phil Cash, Chris Aranda, Roger Pio, Bill Stephenson, and Tyler Brewer, committed to field for the search.

Nathan set a meeting time of 0300 at the Hut, as the drive to CP was estimated at 3 hours and briefing time was to be 0700. Shortly after he finished packing, he received a phone call at 1737 informing him the Subject had been located, safe, after spending the night out in winter conditions. Nathan sent out the stand down message over the Callout system.

2022-04 SEARCH Kern / Kern River – Keysville South Miles

April 1, Dave Miles received an alert at 1420 from the PulsePoint app that a rescue had started on the Kern River in the Keysville campground area. Terry Mitchell was the Coordinator assisted by Eileen Loughran, Sheila Rockwell, and Carin Miles. We got the alert to assist at 1536 and left the Hut at 1615. Dave Miles (OL), Phill Cash, David Jensen, Bill Stephenson, and Christian Aranda were the field team. Robert Jensen had committed to be our driver, but with 5 of us we decided to just take one vehicle.

Our search Subject was a 9 year old boy who had slipped off a rock into the river and had been swept away. An adult had jumped in to save him but after several attempts, lost hold of him and had to be rescued himself.

We arrived at the CP at Granite Launch at 1720 and started searching north, up the east side of the river at 1740. After meeting the KVSAR team searching south, we returned to our vehicles and were released from the CP at 1936. With no signs of the Subject and the approaching darkness, the search was suspended until the following day. We returned to the Hut at 2045.

2022-05 SEARCH Kern / Kern River – Keysville South Miles

This was the continuation of the previous day (April 2nd) search for a 9 year old male who had been swept away in the Kern River near the Keysville Campground. This additional callout began while the original search team was headed to the search area. Terry Mitchell was the Coordinator assisted by Eileen Loughran and Carin Miles. Dave Miles continued as the (OL), Dan Bishop, Nick Pio, David Jensen, Bill Stephenson, Phil Cash, Katie Kempema, and Christian Aranda committed to the field team while Robert Jensen committed as our driver and was a resource for the CP in transporting teams to and from their search assignments. We left the Hut at 0605 and arrived at the Granite Launch CP at 0710.

Our first assignments were 3 search areas on the West side of the river Keysville campground to Granite Launch. Miles divided the teams as follows:

- Area 1 Miles, Kempema, Aranda
- Area 3 Bishop, N Pio
- Area 5 Stephenson, Cash, Jensen

The poor light conditions in the morning did not help in observing any submerged objects more than a few inches below the water surface. Many of the brushy areas included a lot of poison oak.

Our teams returned to the CP around 1100. Our second assignments were 3 search areas on the East side of the river Keysville campground to Granite Launch. Miles divided the teams as follows:

- Area 2 Stephenson, N Pio
- Area 4 Bishop, Kempema, Aranda
- Area 6 Cash, Jensen

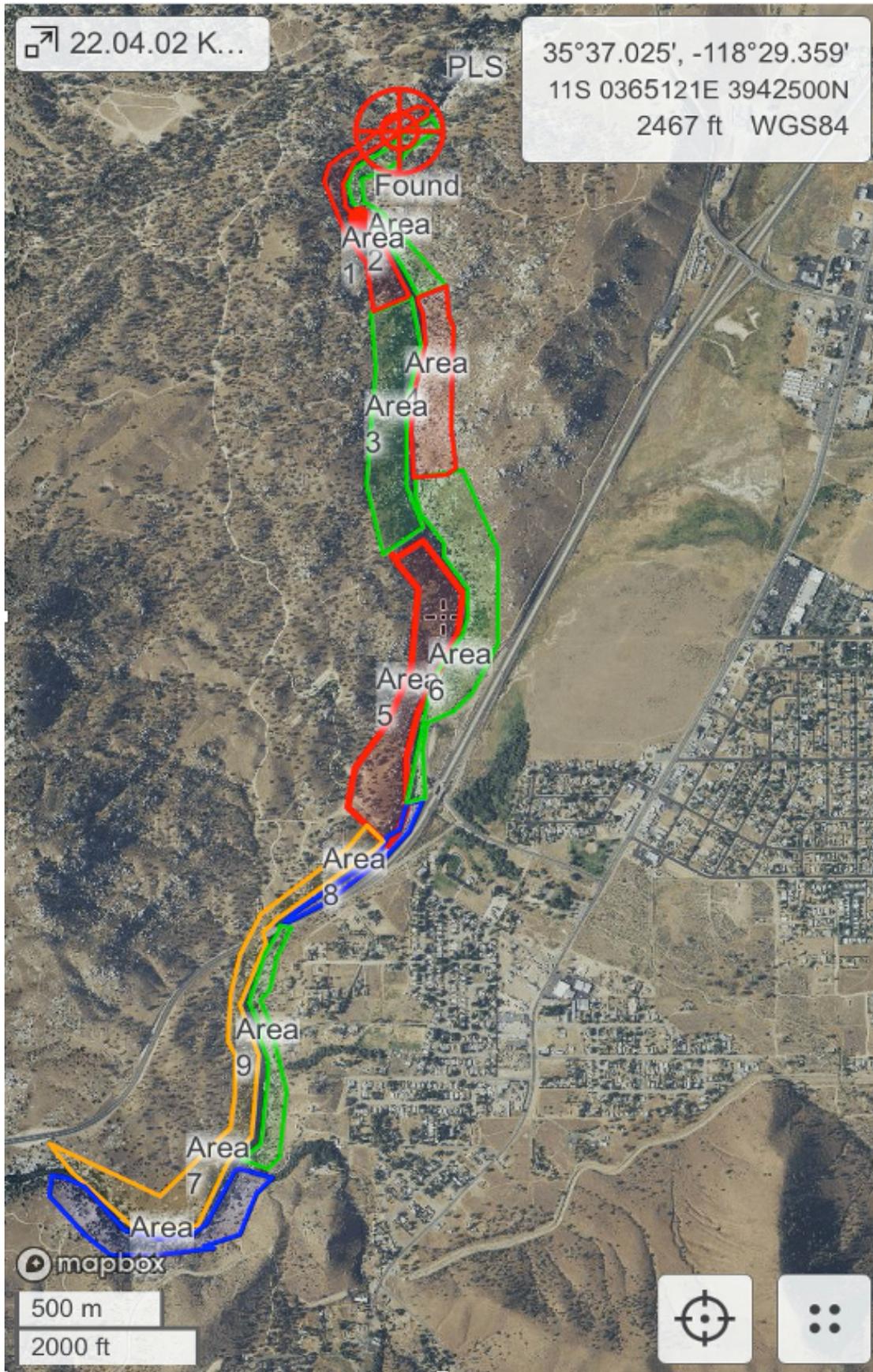


Figure 1. Search Area via CAL TOPO



Figure 2. River Right

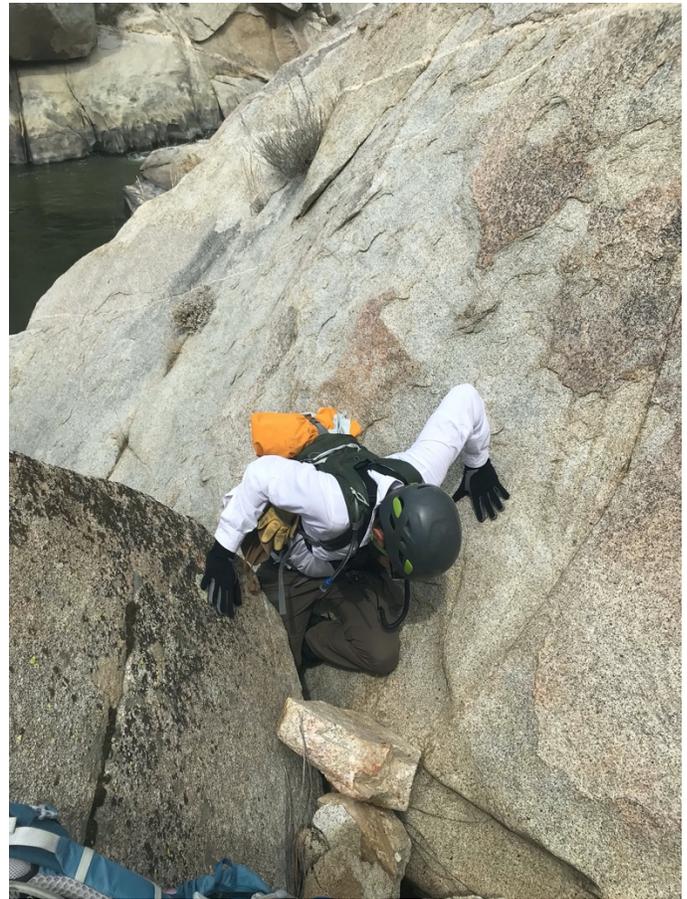


Figure 3 River Left

After all our teams returned to the CP and had lunch, Miles assigned the teams as follows to search our last area from Granite Launch several miles to the South along the West side of the river:

- Area 7 (above bridge) Cash, Jensen, Stephenson
- Area 7 (below bridge) Bishop, Kempema, Aranda, N Pio

The Subject was not located. Following the debrief we made plans for another follow-on search that was to occur on 09 April. We returned to the Hut at 1740.

2022-06 ALERT Kern / Kern River – Keysville South Miles

As part of the continuing search for a missing 9 year old in the Kern River, Sgt. Kimmel asked for CLMRG to provide search teams for Saturday April 9th. D.Miles, T.Mitchell, E.Loughran, D.Bishop, D.Jenson, R.Pio, J.Kromphardt, C.Aranda, and R.Jensen committed. This OP did not happen since the subject was recovered on April 7, 2022.

2022-07 RECOVERY Kern / Kern River – Keysville South Miles

This was the continuation of the search efforts that began on Saturday, April 2nd. On Thursday April 7, 2022 the Kern County search helicopter sighted the body of the missing 9 year old in the Kern River. We initiated a callout at 1246 and were able to leave the Hut at 1400. The Coordinator was Terry Mitchell assisted by Sheila Rockwell. The field team was Dave Miles(OL), Nick Pio, Roger Pio, Phillip Cash, and Christian Aranda. We arrived at the CP in the Keysville South campground.

Brian Baskin, from Kern Valley SAR, wanted CLMRG to setup and run the rope rigging on the far side of the river. Miles assigned N Pio and Cash for that task. Taking ropes and gear they were deployed to the other side of the river using two KVSAR boats around 1600. Both boats stopped on the shore while the rigging was done. R Pio, Aranda, and Miles carried gear and extra water to the near side location.

The KVSAR team and setup an anchor for the near side main line and Miles setup an anchor for the near side tag line. Miles threw a 100 ft throw bag to the far side of the river and had the far side team pull over a main and tag rope. There was a bit of confusion on how the rigging should be done but was sorted out quickly and the system was attached to the back of the large rescue boat. We used hand signals to coordinate all the rope movements due to the river noise. This system was quite efficient. A large eddy current in the middle of the river was a bit of a challenge.

We then maneuvered the raft via main and tag lines. Upon completion of the mission, we pulled the boat to the far side to collect N Pio, Cash and all the far side rigging. The boat then came back across the river, and we disassemble the large boat and carried everything back up the trail to the CP. At 1930 we all headed for Kernville, arrived at the hut 2235

It really helped that we had recently done some river training with KVSAR and there is still much to learn. They really appreciated our team running the rigging and we functioned as one team.

*The Los Angeles Times picked up the story and published an article about the dangers of the Kern River, warning of swift current, undertow, and the possibility of getting caught in debris or an eddy.

2022-08 INCIDENT Kern/Indian Wells and Short Canyons Finco

On April 9, 2022, China Lake Mountain Rescue Group (CLMRG) was supporting the “Run with the Burros” event located in Indian Wells Canyon and Short Canyon. Jessica Kormelink was the lead organizer for CLMRG and our involvement in this event. Linda Finco, Nick Pio, Phil Cash, Bill Stephenson, Katie Kempema and Bill Ferguson also volunteered to assist. CLMRG was on site to provide any Search and Rescue resources needed in case of any injuries or if participants were to get lost. This endurance event consisted of three routes for the participants, 10-mile, 17.5 mile and marathon (approximately 26.5 miles). Participants could enter as solo runners or run with a burro. We arrived at the event around 7 am and set up our base between the Water Crossing and Top aid stations in Indian Wells Canyon. This gave us quick access to any participant on the longer/upper route and a reasonable response time to any participant on the lower 10-mile loop through Short Canyon. Cash and N Pio monitored the radio traffic related to the race that kept track of all the participants.

There were reported to be 48 participants completing the 17.5-mile upper route. Just prior to receiving word that all participants had been through the Top aid station, three participants wandered back to our location. Somehow, they became confused on the route between the Mine and Top aid stations and ended back down at our location. We directed them to the route headed down from the Top going down towards the Water Crossing.

Around 11:00, and after all participants had been accounted for through the Top aid stations and confirmed by the sweep vehicle to be heading back to the Water Crossing, the decision was made to move to our location to the Junction aid station where we would now have a quicker response to the participants finishing the lower route.

Enroute to our new location we received a first aid request from the race coordinator at Base. We were requested to respond to an elderly female runner reporting over-heating problems. The subject was on the lower 10-mile route. Since initially we were not sure of her location, we divided up into two groups Kormelink and N Pio (CLMRG 1) took the Junction and headed up the lower route while Cash in one vehicle and Finco, Kempema and Stephenson (CLMRG 2) in a 2nd vehicle continued to Base in order to gather more information. Dr. Bill had stayed back at or original location to monitor the participants.

At race Base we were informed the participant was somewhere on the 10-mile route and about one and a half miles from the finish. The race coordinator requested to go with Cash in the lead vehicle to help us locate the participant. The race coordinator suggested one of our members and she would hike backwards on the route while the other two vehicles continued on the road which would eventually meet back on the route. This way we were guaranteed to locate the participant if she stayed on the route. At this time, Finco grabbed some water and along with the race coordinator continued on foot traveling the racecourse while Cash and CLMRG 2 took the road. Cash was first to arrive

on the scene, followed shortly by CLMRG 2 and then Finco and the race coordinator. The participant was Giovanna Schaefer, who was still walking the course when Cash arrived and began 1st aid. She was alert and oriented (AO4) while Cash was making initial assessments. She did appear to be suffering from the onset of heat exhaustion symptoms (complaints of being too hot, exhausted, thirsty, red complexion, skin hot to touch but still sweating). Cash and Stephenson helped Giovanna into Cash's air-conditioned vehicle while Kempema provided cool water and ice packs for her neck area. The race coordinator sat with Giovanna for approximately 5 minutes in the air-conditioned vehicle. Giovanna agreed she was not going to finish the race, so we returned to Base where Dr. Bill made a further assessment. By this time Giovanna's condition had improved significantly in the short time since receiving initial 1st aid. Giovanna decided not to seek further treatment and continued recovering at race Base at around 11:35am. This closed CLMRG 2 involvement, so we returned to the Junction aid station location where we met up with CLMRG 1 and eventually Cash. Dr. Bill left after confirming Giovanna needed no additional medical assistance. CLMRG moved to race base around 1500 and saw Giovanna again where she thanked us for our response.



Community Service

We are frequently asked to help out with various activities where our skills could come in handy – like manning first aid stations for Bike races, Running races, and “Run with a Burro” annual race/walk. (ever tried to get a burro to run?)

“We are presently offering the "Lost!..But Found, Safe and Sound” wilderness safety program at our elementary schools. Based on the principles of the original “Hug a Tree” program, kids are taught what do if if they get lost in the wilderness to help searchers find them including to stay in one place and how to keep warm. Pamphlets are provided for parents on how they can help searchers too- have kids wear colorful clothing, make imprints of shoe prints before a trip, etc. The kids are taught to actively help in the effort. We get feedback that kids do indeed remember what to do if they get lost.”

PCT news - CLMRG members Nathan Simons and Dadija Bliudzius are (separately) hiking NORthBOund on the Pacific Crest Trail, leaving the Mexico border in mid-April and expecting to get to Canada in September.