

Inyo County Search and Rescue

July 2019 General Meeting Minutes

July 11 2019

Call to Order

The July Inyo SAR general meeting was held at the Posse Hut, called to order at 7:03 by Todd Vogel, as Elsbeth was in the field. Meeting was held second week in July because of the 4 July holiday.

New people attending the meeting: Padma from Manzanar came to check things out, and Denise and Keana – friends of Stacey – came to learn about SAR.

June 2019 Events

A lot happened this month! 10 missions, some of which were discussed:

9 June Ledge-out on Whitney. Dean and Cordero hiked in and saw him with his headlamp yelling. Got lost around Lone Pine lake, went past the lake ended up on a high point.

16 June Fall on Temple Crag. Solved by heli. Couple were simul-climbing, bottom person fell, hit the vertical face and got pretty beat up. Partner held the fall – rope looped over some horns even though they had no pieces in. She regained consciousness, was able to get to a ledge. Partner managed to climb back down to her and set up an anchor. Climbed back up to ridge to get cell service after spot device failed to produce rescue.

Heli could only take 8 gallons -- had to use hot seat with C-collar instead of backboard because of ledge, which took just minutes, from Todd hitting the ledge to getting her off in the heli. Todd climbed out with the guy, and headed down gully on 30-degree snow; every step of the way, snow was sliding around them. Slid down from contact pass on snow, then kicked off a wet slab slide coming down to 2nd lake. Would have taken 10-12 hours to access patient by ground from second lake.

Dave mentions: C-collar in hot seat is fine for spinal stuff. Will send a video of rescue in Europe. Vic mentions that having tech-trained members is separate from class-5 climbers. Would be good to have this projection in the callouts too.

19 June Tao Ling Search 3 days later Tao Ling search began. Was eventually found North-NW side of peak down by arctic lakes with no visible trauma, no obvious fall line, on his side with his head on his hands. Vic thinks he was trying to get down the mountaineers route. Headed north off the summit, missed the MR, somehow wormed his way down. Had lightweight gear, ultralight windbreaker, one microspike.

Ian mentions that social media clues were false positives. Family reached out over the internet. This was actually how Sheriffs got a timeline. Phone data photos gave direction and time. Another group told sheriffs when he was gone from the summit, from which they knew he didn't go down the main trail. On other hand, got a bunch of misdirection with abandoned backpacks or ice axes.

This was also the first time the team deployed UAV at the same time -- Lane and Nik covered a lot of ground for over an hour in places where it would've been dangerous to go in-person. Vic reports that they had to go through 3 people to get approval, but it was deemed useful enough to put 2 UAVs in ICSO budget request next year.

2 July Evolution Traverse Fall Plan A with heli worked. Todd's writeup was epic – read all about it on email. They were right on the edge of the park, but just within Inyo Co. Todd points out that they didn't drink any water, even though there was 3rd-class access to snow just below them and they had stoves.

Todd wanted to rappel down the east face, but they were happy climbing out.

3 July Clipped out hiker on Bishop Pass who turned out to have a broken leg. Dave P reports: 3 PCT hikers coming over Bishop Pass. They made it down 100 ft -- all had microspikes and ice axes and no clue what to do with them. Freaked out and hunkered down. SAR got up there about 7pm and kicked steps up to them -- short-roped them individually with a harness. Got them down, one said her ankle hurt and it was clear that she couldn't do any unstable steps.

Touched base with Nate who coordinated a heli to get her out the next day. Had to work to convince her companions to stay with her overnight! Came out the next day with H80 and turns out she had a broken fibula that she'd apparently been walking on for a few days. Paul R put her up at the zoo, and she'll be flying back to Germany sometime soon

Team Business:

PSAR Victor made a request for coordinated action by the team on behalf of PSAR efforts. Ed is doing PSAR solo most of the time, but it is becoming more than one person can handle. ICSO is getting multiple calls a day now, up to a dozen a week, and we need to mitigate as much as possible.

Vic is officially requesting that the team put together a PSAR committee to brainstorm, with three suggested areas of focus:

1. Social media: Referenced a random note found at trailhead kiosk about turning around, crampons, and self-management, which he re-posted on Instagram & advocates that everyone repost. Sheriff's dept might create an account that some board members could post to.
2. Physical stuff: signage, kiosks, something that gets posted at the ranger station.
3. Sweat equity: people to beat the trail, help with any of the above, and brainstorm

Vic clarified that PSAR activities can't be officially approved as trainings because there isn't technically a training. But you are covered by county if out doing volunteer work (\$50K accident, excess liability of \$1M) -- just not state (DSW) coverage.

Note also: PSAR is not self-deploy – if intending to do PSAR, you need to call in and get approval from the coordinators, and should drive official SAR vehicles.

Other items

Stacey is eligible for full membership (even though she's moving away and this will be her last meeting for a while!). Lots of support from the team, voting members present (16) unanimously voted to approve.

Kristen Alvarez sent writeup from Mt Hood MRA conference via email -- all should read.

Upcoming dates:

18 July Patient Packaging We will do patient packaging training at the Posse Hut, starting at 7pm. We will review improvised litters, sked and conventional litter packaging.

Sonja wants to do another Zodiac training, but can't do it this month, but maybe later in the summer. Will send out a link to get boat certification which is required before anyone can do the training.

Adjournment

Todd adjourns the meeting at 8:02 pm.