



3 Men stranded in Snow Cat

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Toro Peak, Santa Rosa Mtns
1979-006

By Kevin Walker

At approximately 2:30 a.m. (who's precise at that time of the morning) Wednesday I was awakened with news of a rescue in the Santa Rosa Mountains. It seemed that three men who were employed by a company in Texas, became stranded when their Snow Cat got stuck in the deep snow below Toro Peak. The three men were enroute to service a microwave unit on the peak when the accident occurred. A base unit had been in radio contact with the men until shortly after they became stuck. So, because of the scattered snow flurries and strong wind, RMRU was activated.

Since I had been doing some clean-up work on the rescue van the previous day, and it hadn't been returned yet, I went ahead and started for the Sugar Loaf Cafe where base camp was to be set up. Due to extremely thick fog, it was a very slow trip up the mountain. I made a quick stop at Mountain Center to pick up fellow team member Dave Ezell, and then continued on to the cafe. Shortly after arriving we were met by Sgt. Weakly from the Banning Office of the Riverside County Sheriff's Department. He informed us that Don Landells was enroute. There were a few holes in the clouds, but not to many for night flying. Nevertheless, Don did arrive. Shortly after his arrival, radio contact was regained with the three men.

After talking with them, it was decided our services would not be needed after all, since they had a large fire going and had plenty of warm clothing. When there was enough light in the morning, another Snow Cat would be sent in to get them unstuck. So, with that news the rest of us troopies headed for home.

RMRU is a volunteer search and rescue team that covers Riverside County and assists other teams with search and rescue efforts in other counties. Each member purchases their own equipment and takes time off work, without compensation, to participate in search and rescue missions. Team equipment is purchased from contributions from the community. We are a non-profit organization and are funded by [donations](#) from people like you.