



Man fell down steep drop-off

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Long Valley
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By Henry Negrete

Sometimes the calls we get are not so glorious, such was the case on September 7th. The call was concerning the discovery of a man's body, found in a steep drop-off by a tourist near the top tramway station. We were requested by the Riverside Sheriff's Office to assist the investigating officer and Deputy Coroner in recovering the body for identification. Our plan of action was to meet at the lower tram station at first light and take the first tram car up normally used to carry supplies and employees up to the top. Our hopes were to try to complete the task before normal tourist traffic began.

As we loaded our personal gear and technical team equipment on the tram car thoughts began to formulate in our heads about our familiarity with the area and the probable location of our demised subject.

We split into two teams, the first group of six arrived at the top with the R.S.O. investigator to relocate and assess the extraction out of the rough terrain. The second team at the lower tram station was standing by to bring up any additional equipment needed and also coordinating the availability of helicopter assistance if so designated. All seemed to be going according to plan, with our first team en route towards the location and air support confirmed.

Just as our team neared the area they met up with the Long Valley State Park Rangers, who had been recruited by an anxious Deputy Coroner, to work through the early morning hours and extract the body.

We were quite puzzled as to the lack of coordination between agencies, and considerable discussion ensued about how we might tighten up our coordinated efforts. This mission for RMRU without a doubt ended on a positive note. We worked out steps towards more effective cooperative efforts and the task at hand was very well accomplished by the State Park Rangers.

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.