

Bicyclists spend a cold night out

**January 23, 2000
Thomas Mountain
2000-005**

By Glenn Henderson

RMRU was contacted by the Sheriff Department regarding five mountain bikers that were overdue on a ride to Thomas Mountain. They were dressed in bike shorts and t-shirts and were carrying a minimal amount of food and water. Larry Ross and I were teamed up and went to cut for sign on Thomas Mountain. We found new sign right away but could only find the tracks of four bikes. We later found out that only four went on the ride. They turned left from Thomas Mountain instead of going all the way up the mountain. Larry and I tracked them in the team's Isuzu Trooper until they cut off and went down the south ridge trail. We left the Isuzu and started hiking down the trail. When we got to the bottom we lost their tracks for awhile but we finally found it upstream, which was headed toward the Lake Hemet Dam where their truck was parked. We radioed back to base to get someone to the dam and shout to see if they

could spot them. Jim Fairchild and Debbiy Riegle found them there. They were 24 hours overdue when we found them. They had spent the night huddled together for warmth. They were cold, hungry and thirsty but otherwise OK. The Bicyclist were identified as Timothy Ficken, 21, Douglas Wells, 45, Tommy Francis, 45, and his 17 year old son from Rosemead, and Charles Green, 19, of La Jolla.



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.