



Body Recovery

July 9th, 2005
Saddle Junction, above Idyllwild
2003-024

by Dr. Ray Hussey

RMRU was in the middle of technical rock training at Pine Cove County Park when teammate Henry Negrete came running up to us at approximately 0900 hours with a report from IFD (Idyllwild Fire Department), that a middle-aged male hiker had collapsed after climbing up Devil's Slide Trail to Saddle Junction, and had no pulse or respiratory activity with fellow hikers performing CPR.

We immediately called the Valle Vista Sheriff's station and the sheriff's aerosquadron to meet me at Keenwild Heliport with the medical pack. We were immediately on our way and within 5 minutes, I was winched down in the immediate vicinity of the subject.

In the meantime, several RMRU team members hiked up Devil's Slide Trail and met me at the Saddle Junction within 20 minutes of my arrival by helicopter. The subject was a 45 year old male with no pulse, no spontaneous respiration, and a negative corneal reflex -- CPR was continued for another 15 minutes with the same findings, and the subject was pronounced dead at approximately 1015 hours.

Jim Manues, myself, and fellow hikers then bagged the subject and transported him to a clear area for helicopter winch extraction -- this became a bit exciting because the winch cable has a very large hook on its end and it swung towards us like a pendulum. On the immediate command of Jim Manues, we all "hit the deck!" The winch was promptly controlled and straightened out and the subject was extracted to Keenwild. Fellow team members and I then hiked through skunk cabbage where we met USFS personnel who directed us to Reeds Meadow where the RSO helicopter had found a clear landing zone and then promptly evacuated us to Keenwild heliport near Mountain Center.

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

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