

Search Deep Canyon

July 30, 2014

Deep Canyon off 74 below Pinyon Flats

2014-034

Written by Eric Holden

After a quick hour or two of sleep from the previous night's mission I was out the door heading towards the Cahuilla Tewanet Vista Point. RMRU was called out to assist DSAR (Desert Search and Rescue) who had been searching the area for missing 34 year old, Juan Pedro Valladares. DSAR needed a technical team to rappel into the canyon and see what we could see. This would be another mission with fellow RMRU member Les Walker. If ropes are involved, he is the man you want!

We arrived on scene at 5am to beat the desert heat and at first light began setting up our ropes to descend into the canyon. We brought over 1,000' of ropes but would only use about 400'. We set up an anchor system utilizing 3 cams and a large boulder for redundancy. The rock around the area was very loose and definitely added to the degree of difficulty for this rappel. Les was the first over the edge and made the 150 foot rappel look easy.



Les on Rappel
Photo by Eric Holden.

After he got into an area protected from rock fall I went over the edge and was quickly on the ground. We proceeded all the way to the canyon bottom and had no sign of our subject. Once in the main drainage we did find recent foot prints.



Les in Deep Canyon
Photo by Eric Holden.

We followed them for a few miles leading up canyon until they were lost among the hard packed soil of the Cactus Springs Trail. It was only 9am but temps were in the mid-90s and we made the call back to base. Luckily the Sheriff's Aviation unit was out assisting us and able to land on a small saddle. A quick flight and car ride later and we were back at the command post.

We let DSAR know our findings and went back to the cliff to retrieve our ropes and gear. The technical part of the mission went well but unfortunately no addition signs of Mr. Valladares were found.

Serval days latter Mr. Valladares was discovered alive on the other side of the highway from where we were searching by a 6 year old girl out playing.

RMRU Members Involved: Eric Holden and Les Walker.

Other Teams: Desert Search and Rescue, Riverside County Search Dogs, and Riverside

Aviation Unit.

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.