RMRU

Lost 66-year-old Hiker

June 8, 2017
Marion Mountain Trail
2017-026

Written by Shani Pynn

At roughly 11:45 PM on Thursday night the team was called out to help with a hiker in the Marion Mountain Trail area who had become lost. The team was directed to meet at the Marion Mountain trailhead. As I was driving to the trail I got a call from Glenn, who would be running base for the mission and he informed me that the hiker was equipped to spend the night at his location and we would be starting our search at first light. As I was still close to home I went back to get a few hours' sleep and then drove to the trailhead to meet the team at 6 AM Friday.

When I arrived, Glen, Michael, Corey, and Kevin were at Marion Mountain campground with the Deputy. Kevin briefed Michael, Corey, and I that our subject, a man in his mid-60s, had hiked up on Wednesday and stayed overnight to Thursday as part of his planned trip. He then had taken a wrong turn on the trails somewhere, become lost, and called his daughter who, then, contacted the sheriffs to have us called out.

At this time, we did not have any more information on his location and Kevin called and left a message on the subject's cell phone asking him to call 911 if he got the message. We then relocated to the trailhead and began walking up Marion Mountain trail. We set out as a four-person team with the intention to separate into two teams at Deer Springs and check the Fuller Ridge and Deer Springs trails on our way back to base if necessary.

Since we had been informed the subject was in good health we all carried only essential minimal gear to be able to cover more ground faster. We checked in with glen at base every half hour with our location and status. While hiking up, we did call outs to the subject roughly every 10 to 15 minutes as the calm weather was good for carrying voices and we hoped to be able to contact him if he was on a nearby trail.

Shortly after 8:30 AM, when we were about a half mile from Deer Springs, we contacted our subject, who had heard our last two call outs and been moving toward us along the trail. Kevin radioed in to base that we had located our subject so Glen could let any other team members and Star 9 know that we would be able to walk him out with the people we had. The subject was in fairly good spirits and had had food and water earlier in the morning. We gave him some more snacks and some water and Gatorade and waited with him for a few minutes before hiking out.

(Shani, Subject, and Corey) on trail near where subject found
Photo by Kevin Kearn.

(Michael, Kevin, and Subject) at food break
Photo by Shani Pynn.

He told us he had spent too much time up at the peak of the mountain and had taken a wrong turn on the trails on his way back. He ended up on Fuller Ridge and went down that trail for a couple of hours. At this point he called his daughter to let her know he was lost, but okay. Then he found a sheltered spot to spend the night and tried to find his way again in the morning. We thanked him for making sure she knew he was okay spending the night as that allowed us to begin our search in the morning when we could be safer and better rested.

Hiking out, Corey took subjects pack inside his own for hike out
Photo by Shani Pynn.

After our short break, we started back down the trail and were able to hike back down to the trailhead by roughly 10:15 AM without incident. There, we met up with Glen and the Sheriff, who had relocated to the trailhead as well.

(Corey, Shani, Kevin, Subject, Michael, and Glenn)
Photo by Deputy.

RMRU Members Involved: Corey Ellison, Michael George, Glen Henderson, Kevin Kearn, and Shani Pynn.