



Sierra Madre Lost Hiker

July 24, 2017
Chantry Flats
2017-036

Written by Michael George

Early Saturday morning my breakfast was interrupted by a page for an Out of County search in Sierra Madre. I called the rescue line and learned there was a search for a gentleman who had been missing overnight. I soon found out from my Call Captain that I was the only one available from RMRU and would be linking up with members from our sister team, Desert Search & Rescue (DSAR). When I arrived at the Chantry Flats Ranger Station I was greeted by 4 members from DSAR. We were just in time as new assignments were just being handed out. We were slated to search a rugged canyon just to the west of us.

Our subject had been missing 24 hours by then, and there was a lot of terrain to cover by then. We were going to be airlifted to the top of the canyon so that we could descend the various trails that made their way down through the brush. But as we were loading our gear into the helicopter we were asked to hold tight, as there was a probable sighting of our subject. However, he was Nowhere even close to our location. We waited for until it was determined a positive identification had been made.

Our subject had been given a lift home late last night. I can only wonder that the family members the Sheriff's Department had contacted late last night, were not aware that their 'missing' member had returned safely. We were dismissed to go home about noon. Now, feeling that I had missed out of an exciting hike, and helicopter ride, I decided to expend some built up energy. I elected to go on an 8 mile loop up to some beautiful falls. During this hike I encountered an unexpected hiking buddy. An adolescent bear who decided to follow me for about 2 miles, after which I think he got exasperated by my constant stopping and looking around. He left without even saying good-bye. I have to say though, it was the highlight of my day and even trumped the helicopter ride.

RMRU Members Involved: Michael George.

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.