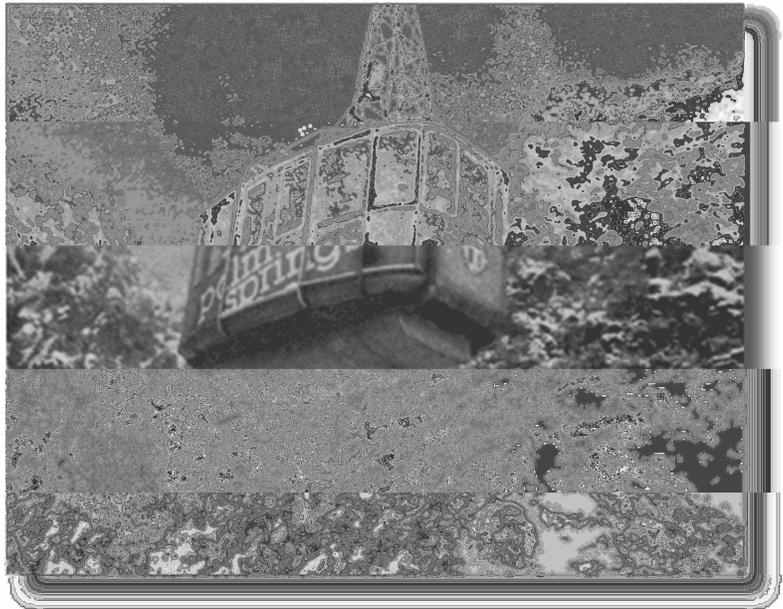


## Standby to assist with fire

**June 29, 1985**  
**Cabazon Fire, San Jacinto Mtns**  
**1985-030**

By Kevin Walker

Late Friday night as the Cabazon Fire burned out of control in the San Jacinto Mountains, Walt Walker was contacted through the California Division of Forestry and the United States Forest Service. To Walt's surprise the fire was getting dangerously close to the upper station of the Palm Springs Aerial Tramway. Walt learned that the plan for Saturday called for putting technical firefighters out into the vicinity of the tram. If the wind blew like it did on Friday, the tram would be in serious danger. Our role would be to stand by in the event a fire fighter became injured in the technical terrain.



Saturday morning we met at the fire camp in Cabazon. This was my first time to a fire camp. It was impressive in an eerie sense. It looked like a base camp out of a war movie. I expressed my feeling to fellow member Rob Gardner who is an armed forces veteran, and he told me I was pretty darn close to being right. Walt checked us in. Our assignment was to standby at the lower and upper station of the tram which had been closed the day before because of the fire. Fire retardant clothing, goggles, helmets, gloves, fire shelters, and first aid kits were issued to us. Some members like Bill Blaschko looked as if Uncle Same had caught up to them. At any rate we went down to the tram. After arriving and making ourselves comfortable either inside the building or out in the shade, I called Landells Aviation and checked to see if a pilot and helicopter would be available on short notice that day. The reply was to the affirmative.

The day was spent visiting with Tram manager Bob Ficker and number one assistant Linda Vivian, watching firefighters set back-fires to protect the tram, and going through gear. Fortunately the wind did not move the fire that fast in our direction, so our services

where never needed. But we made new friends, were fed like "Kings" and learned that those guys in the field worked pretty darn hard to save our mountain. I do not know what the totals for burned acreage were, but burning from Cabazon through Jensen Canyon, Snow Creek, Falls Creek, and close to Chino Canyon a large amount of country was destroyed. Remember only you....

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.