



Injured Hiker

May 22, 2014
Skyline Trail Palm Springs
2014-017

Written by Glenn Henderson

I received a call from dispatch at 11:30 PM that the Aviation unit wanted one RMRU person to fly with them for an injured hiker on the Skyline Trail above Palm Springs. Since I am only 10 minutes from the hanger I got out of bed, got dressed, grabbed my pack and was out the door in 10 minutes. When I got to the hanger I met pilot Chad Marlat and TFO (technical flight officer) Ray Heirs. They explained that we would have to go to Banning and then around the mountain to get to our two hikers due to cloud cover.

Once we got on scene we could see that it looked like a pretty easy hoist. We flew back down to Palm Springs and got Ray ready to run the hoist and took off again. I was lowered to the two subjects, found out that one had hurt the back of his leg and could not walk out. I got him into one of the screamer suits, explained what was going to happen and what to do when he got up to the helicopter. He went up with no problem and they flew him back down to Palm Springs. Our next hiker was ready and the same scenario completed leaving me on my own on the side of the mountain.

It was a beautiful night, the Big Dipper was brilliant, and looked so close that I could touch it. The coyotes were barking in the distance and there was no wind at all. The night was very peaceful place after the hustle of getting our two hikers out to safety. Star 9 soon came back for me and I was hoisted into the bird and off we went to try and find our way back under the clouds in the Banning Pass. It was only after we were flying home that I heard Ray ask Chad if it was ok to tell me now. Chad said "sure" so Ray told me that this was his first hoist mission ever and it was at night! Ray did a perfect job getting all of us safely in and out of the helicopter so it's obvious he paid attention during training. It was good to be there for his first rescue.

RMRU Members Involved: Glenn Henderson.

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