



Horse Rescue

April 03, 2016
PCT Snow Creek
2016-014

Written by Glenn Henderson

I received a call from call coordinator Gwenda Yates that two RMRU members were needed to respond to a report of two injured horses with their owner on the PCT (Pacific Crest Trail) above Snow Creek. Cameron Dickinson and I responded to the Sheriff's helicopter hanger at Ryan Field in Hemet.

The horse's owner, Mike, was packing in supplies for the PCTA (Pacific Crest Trail Association) to do some trail maintenance work. As they were hiking up, a large swarm of bees attacked the horses and sent two of them over the side of the trail and down the mountain trying to get away. Both horses were injured by falling, rolling and running down and away. They ended up about a quarter mile apart and 300 yards below the trail. Mike was uninjured so we put him in a screamer suit and had him airlifted out. Since RMRU has no experience or training in large animal rescue our Sheriff's department put out a call for Riverside City fire departments HART, (Horse and Animal Rescue Team), to help us get the horses out.

That team really are the experts at what they do. A veterinarian and four members of the HART team and TFO (technical flight officer) Manny Romero were flown in and met by Cam. Cam led them to the first horse which we all felt was the least injured. I stayed with the second horse. The Hart team got the harness rigged up, the vet gave a final sedative and Pilot Tony Bowen flew the horse out. No problems.



**The First Horse being lifted out
Photo by Riverside HART Member.**

They all hiked over to me where the vet started an IV line in the horse's neck and she gave him a mild sedative. He had been entirely docile for the three hours or so that I was with him. Tony and TFO Ray Hiers flew the apparatus to rig the horse up to fly my horse out. Just as they got ready to start moving to the horse something spooked him. He ran over me and off a cliff and was killed. I could not believe what had just happened. He had been so calm that I have to wonder if a bee stung him again that caused him to jump into me.

After everyone calmed down we gathered up all our gear and Tony came back and did a one skid pickup of all of us in teams of two. It was a pretty depressed group of people back at base. No one knew what to say. Mike was very understanding but you could tell he was shaken up. We finally got Cam, Ray, Manny and me back in the helicopter and we flew back to Hemet Ryan.

RMRU Members Involved: Cameron Dickinson and Glenn Henderson.

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.