



Two Lost Hikers

November 4, 2017
Ortega Highway (Candy Store)
2017-046

Written by Eric Holden

We were just finishing our biannual helicopter training when the word came out that we had two lost hikers in the mountains north of the Ortega Highway. Corey and myself grabbed our hasty packs and joined the Star-9 crew to begin our trip out there. As we approached the Ortega Mountains we began to see low wispy cloud, shortening our ability for a possible aerial extraction. We did not know the subject's exact location but after about 15 minutes of searching we spotted the faintest of lights in the distances were no light should be. Turns out it was our subjects.

As time was a factor we landed across from the candy store, suited up for a hoist, and dropped Corey off to secure the Landing Zone. Within a few minutes the expert crew of Star-9 lowered me right to the subjects. Turns out they had a small dog we did not know about. Luckily it was small enough to fit into my backpack. A couple of screamer suits later and both subjects were up in the helicopter. As I was being hosted up all I could think of was "please let this dog not rip out of my bag right now". Thankfully the pup was calm and comfy for the ride back to the candy store. The subjects were reunited with their family and I got to show Corey my backpack dog surprise.

Turns out the subjects were hiking and got lost and turned around on the trails. They had little clothing, water, or other gear and when it got dark, they called 911. A map/Compass/GPS/Cell phone could have prevented the rescue as they were still on the trail, just disoriented.

RMRU Members Involved: Corey Ellison, Eric Holden.

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.