



Missing Woman

May 1, 2019
Antsell Rock
2019-026

Written by Tyler Shumway

Every first Wednesday of the Month we have our team meeting at 7pm. We had all just gotten back from a prior mission that day that was quickly concluded due to a self-rescue. Just as we were wrapping up the meeting, we got word from Deputy Waters that another mission was about to go down. This time it was on the Desert Divide near South Peak with reports of a missing female hiker. More information was provided by the subject's Husband who made the 911 call and stated that he had become separated from his wife and could not locate her.

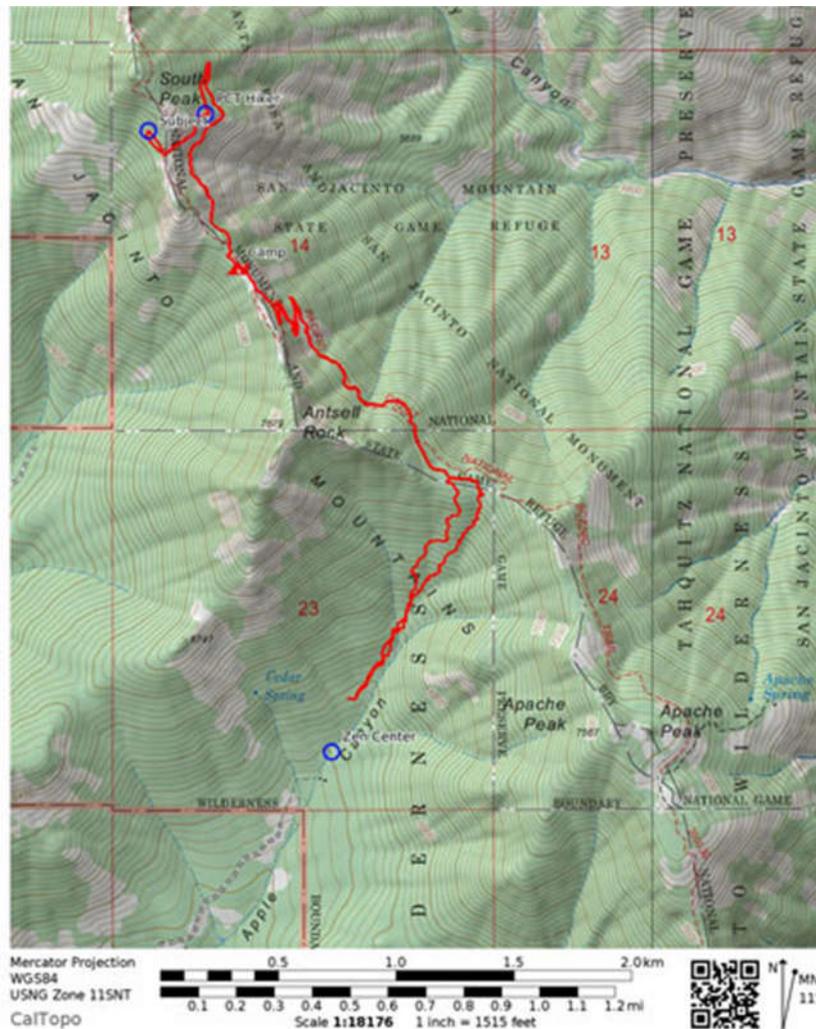
Another PCT hiker (trail name Oatmeal) was on scene and was trying to help locate the missing hiker. Oatmeal was able to make brief voice contact with the hiker but could not discern that exact location due to the nature of the terrain. The subject's husband stated that she likes to go off trail and scramble nearby peaks.

Our team quickly responded to Lake Hemet Station to establish base. It was decided James and I would be a hasty team and deploy from the Zen Center in Apple Canyon. Our coordinates put the Husband's location at PCT mile 172 which is where he last saw his wife and had established camp. Oatmeal had hiked further up to PCT mile 173 which is where he had his camp site. James and I crested the ridge at PCT mile 171 which was full of PCT hiker camps.

We asked around if anyone knew of the situation. With no such luck we continued north. We contacted the husband and he was very worried since his wife did not have a headlamp, food or water with her. She did have a few layers of warm clothing. He was able to get voice contact with her shortly after sunset but again due to the steep mountainous terrain it was difficult to tell exactly where it was coming from. We told him to sit tight while we continued along the trail to contact Oatmeal and see if we can get a better idea of where she might be.

James and I quickly made our way to Oatmeal's location doing shout outs along the way. We met up with Oatmeal who was bedding down for the night and his experience was similar in that he could not tell where her voice was coming from and quickly faded with no further contact. With South Peak being less than a mile away we thought for sure we could find her nearby given the fact that she likes peak bagging.

As soon as the trail crosses the ridgeline to the west, James and I did a shout out. We immediately heard a response. We continued a few hundred yards up the trail just before PCT mile 173.5 and amazingly found our subject right in the middle of the trail. She was cold and extremely tired as she had been out by herself for over 6 hours with no food, water or light. Other than fatigue she was okay and very happy to see us. We gave her warm clothing, water and food to lift her spirits. She stated that she left camp to scramble the nearby area and quickly got disorientated. She was able to find the trail but could not figure which way to go back to camp.



Map of South Peak Mission
Photo by Tyler Shumway.

Luckily, she had only gotten about 1.5 miles away from camp and not in treacherous terrain. After refueling we brought our subject back to camp to be reunited with her husband. They were both very thankful for our help and given that no one was injured it was decided they would bed down for the night.

James and I retraced our route back down to the Zen Center while team 2 would head up early in the morning to hike them out. Team 2: Shani, Tony and Blake were to hike up pre-dawn to help safely get the hikers off the mountain.

Written by Shani Pynn

At roughly 5:30 AM I hear Glenn's boots across the floor of the Lake Hemet Mountain Sheriff's station. I look up from my napping spot on the floor and see his head poking through the door of the bunk room. He says he has a job for me. I sit up, put my boots on, and walk out to where him, Tony, Blake and the Deputies were gathered.

Glenn tells us our subject was located and is reunited with her husband, but they were too tired to hike out last night. Our first team had left them safe at their campsite so Tyler could get to work on time, and we were going to go in this morning and hike them out. After a quick repacking for the morning hike (instead of a planned overnight) Glenn drove Tony, Blake, and I to our starting point behind the Zen Center.

We started hiking just before 6 AM and met up with the couple at about 7:30 AM. They were doing well, considering their circumstances, and were packed up and ready to hike. We hiked back the way we came and met up with Glenn and Deputy Parsons back at the Zen Center who drove us back to the mountain station by about 9 AM.



Shani, Subject, Toney, Subject, Blake and Glenn
Photo by Sheriff.

RMRU Members Involved: Cameron Dickinson, Blake Douglas, James Eckhardt, Glenn Henderson, Tony Hughes, Shani Pynn, Tyler Shumway, and Daniel Tran.

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.