

Lost-Injured PCT Hiker

May 9, 2019
Fuller Ridge Trail
2019-029

Written by Vinay Rao

At approximately 11:00am on Thursday morning the RMRU Team received call about a lost and potentially hurt PCT hiker on Fuller Ridge. Given the location of the subject and the 911 caller this mission was coordinated by the Cabazon based Sheriff. Responding team members were Vinay, James, Blake, Kaitlyn, and Michael Cara. Vinay, James and Blake met at the Hemet sub-station and drove the RMRU diesel van to Black Mountain Campground where we were met by two Sheriff deputies.

The deputies indicated that their initial report was that the subject may not actually be hurt or lost but a separate PCT hiker (the 911 caller) had met him and was concerned about his welfare. The deputies gave the team the subject's GPS coordinates and it was determined that he was only 2.5 miles east of the campground on the PCT. Given that Kaitlyn and Michael were going to be driving quite a distance (from Orange County) to respond, a decision was made to inform the RMRU call captain of the situation and have Kaitlyn and Michael hold at their current location near Anza.



Vinay and Blake Hiking Fuller Ridge Trail
Photo by James Eckhardt.

Vinay, James and Blake began the hike to the subject and quite quickly encountered patchy and slushy snow; no crampons or micro-spikes were needed, but our ice axes were useful in providing balance. While heading to the location the team encountered about a dozen PCT hikers who had passed and spoken to the subject and indicated he was sitting on the trail and appeared to be in good health!

Approximately a 1/2 mile from the location of the subject, given that James and Blake were faster hikers, Vinay decided to let James and Blake proceed on the trail. The two quickly reached the subject and he indicated that he was perfectly fine and was puzzled as to why a 911 call was even made. He showed no indication of injury or distress and had plenty of clothing, equipment and food; he was anxious to continue his hike. James and Blake bid him well and returned down to the trail to Vinay and all three met back up with the deputies to provide a final report.



San Jacinto Peak from Fuller Ridge Trail
Photo by James Eckhardt.

An interesting mission!

RMRU Members Involved: Michael Cara, Blake Douglas, James Eckhardt, Kaitlyn Purington, and Vinay Rao.

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.