



Palisades Search

September 11-13, 2019
Saddle Junction to Tahquitz Peak Area
2019-052

Written by Glenn Henderson

The team was activated at 5:30, Wednesday September 11 for a female that had fallen about 40 feet near the Palisades between Saddle Junction and Tahquitz Peak. A group of hikers saw her fall and heard her call for help. They climbed to the fire lookout tower on top of Tahquitz Peak and called 911. They gave an approximate Lat/long for her location.

RMRU members responded to the South Ridge Trail. Cameron and Blake hiked up the South Ridge Trail to the Lat/Long given. They searched the area, calling out for anyone to answer. They did not find anyone. They then climbed back to the trail and hiked out to Humber park searching for anyone along the trail. Nothing.

Thursday morning, I met up with Sharon Ollenburger from Desert Sheriff's Search and Rescue (DSSAR) at Keenwild Heli base. We were flown into the northern edge of the Palisades and we spent the day looking down the sheer rock trying to see to the bottom combined with lots of calling out. Again, nothing.



Looking at Palisades Search Area from Tahquitz Peak
Image by Glenn Henderson.

The Sheriff's department wanted to make sure that if anyone was there and injured that they had every chance of being found. Since we had 7 RMRU members gone to Zion Canyoneering, we called for an OES (Office of Emergency Services) callout. The callout was for type 1 rescuers that must be able to rappel long distances and then be able to climb back up the rope, move the anchors to another location and do it again. This is a high angle rock rescuer's dream callout.

They would all be flown into the site and flown back out by the Sheriff's helicopters. We asked for 20 rescuers and 36 showed up. We flew most of the rescuers in but were not able to get everyone in as we had too many for the limited area. We also had 4 volunteers hike up the drainage from Humber Park to Tahquitz Peak.



Searchers at Heli-spot Tahquitz Peak
Image by Unknown.

No sign was found by the rescuers or from the team that hiked up. We posted on social media that if you were this person and hiked out before we got there to call the Sheriff's office to let us know what happened. They were not in any kind of trouble, but we wanted to know they were ok. We still believe the first hikers that were eyewitnesses did see what they said, and they were totally credible, but the person must have hiked herself out.

RMRU and the Riverside Sheriff would like to thank the other teams that came out to help on this technical mission. ((Orange County SAR, San Bernardino Cave Team, San Diego Mountain Rescue, and Sierra Madre Mountain Rescue Team)

RMRU Members Involved: Kase Chong, Cameron Dickinson, Blake Douglas, Michael George, Glenn Henderson, Vinay Rao, and Raymond Weden.

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.