



Santa Barbara Sheriff's Office



Date: 9/30/2016

Time: 3:15 p.m.

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News Release

Sheriff's Search and Rescue Personnel Rescue Lost Hiker

Montecito - Santa Barbara County Sheriff's Search and Rescue (SBCSAR) team members worked throughout the night and until about noon today to locate and rescue a lost hiker. The team was called out at approximately 10:30 p.m. last night, September 29, 2016, to locate a lost hiker in the Cold Springs Trail area. It took more than twelve hours to locate, reach and transport the 27-year-old San Diego resident safely out of the area.

The lost hiker is a UCSB graduate who was visiting some friends when around 3:00 p.m. yesterday he decided to go on a hike up to Tangerine Falls off the West Fork of the Cold Springs Trail. During his hike, he climbed up the side of the falls but feeling he could not safely climb down, he decided to hike up to East Camino Cielo and call his friends. Using his cell phone, he reached his friends and instructed them to call 9-1-1 if he didn't show up for dinner.

Failing to show up at the designated time and place for dinner, his friends tried calling him but were sent directly to his voicemail. Not being familiar with the hiking trails, his friends drove along the front country mountain roads until they discovered the subject's car parked at the Cold Springs trailhead on Mountain Drive. Not seeing him anywhere near his car, they called 9-1-1 for assistance.

At approximately 10:00 p.m. the Santa Barbara County Public Safety Dispatch Center received the report of the overdue hiker and notified the Santa Barbara County Sheriff's Search and Rescue Team. Ten SBCSAR personnel responded and concentrated their initial efforts by sign-cutting the subject's vehicle for his foot prints and interviewing the subject's friends. Based on the information derived from this effort, the teams were assigned various segments to search in the Cold Springs drainage area.

Compounding the rescue efforts, the subject decided to take a "shortcut" up one of the mountains and went off trail. He soon found himself stranded in 8-foot high brush. As night descended around him the hiker found his cell phone had died and with it his only light. He decided to stay put.

Meanwhile search and rescue efforts continued despite the darkness. In addition to the SBCSAR personnel deployed out in the field, Copter 2 of the Santa Barbara County Sheriff/Fire Air Support Unit arrived on scene and searched from the air for several hours.

At approximately 3 a.m. this morning, September 30, one of the teams hiking high up on an old, non-maintained trail above Tangerine Falls leading to East Camino Cielo Road, heard a voice response as they were calling out the missing hiker's name. Additional teams were then coordinated to hike down from East Camino Cielo to try and locate the missing hiker. Once near enough, the teams went off trail and fought their way through very heavy brush, often crawling on their bellies with their packs out in front to slide under the densely woven brush above them. At 6 a.m. a team of two SBCSAR personnel made their way to the lost hiker and provided him with additional clothing and water since his had run out.

A second SBCSAR team worked its way down from East Camino Cielo Road and used GPS and computer mapping programs to determine the best access to the hiker. At approximately 8 a.m. the second team was able to open up a wide enough trail through the brush to reach the hiker. All personnel along with the hiker then climbed up to the old trail and hiked to East Camino Cielo Road above them.

The hiker was thirsty and tired but uninjured. He was driven back down to the trailhead on Mountain Drive to where his car was parked and released.

SBCSAR reminds hikers to hike with someone and to carry the appropriate equipment for your safety and to help locate you in the event that you need to be rescued. For a full list of important hiking tips go to www.sbcsar.org





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