

SAR lifts climbers off Sisters mountains

Search and Rescue personnel retrieved a Portland man from South Sister after the man fell on a hike last week.

According to Deschutes County Sheriff's Office reports, Deschutes County 911 received a call on August 7 at about 3:40 p.m., reporting a male subject had fallen while descending the summit of South Sister and sustained injuries that left him unable to continue his descent under his own power. The man was later identified as 66-year-old Steve Bachelder from Portland. Bachelder was reported to be on the climber's trail between the false summit lake and the true summit.

The Deschutes County Sheriff's Office Search and Rescue unit was notified immediately. A total of 13 volunteers and one deputy responded to the call.

A hasty team of two DCSO SAR members with Advanced Life Saving training were taken by an AirLink helicopter and dropped off several hundred meters from Bachelder, while 11 additional members started hiking in from the Devils Lake trailhead packing a wheeled litter and additional rescue gear.

Upon reaching Bachelder

and assessing his injuries and mobility, the hasty team determined that an air ambulance would be needed to safely extricate him from the mountain. However, the area where Bachelder was located was not suitable to land a helicopter.

Lightning was seen in the area and the hasty team decided moving Bachelder down to a lower elevation would need to be accomplished as soon as possible, and they wouldn't be able to wait for the litter team to arrive.

With the help of fellow climbers on scene, the hasty team moved Bachelder down to the false summit lake and requested AirLink respond to evaluate that area as a suitable landing zone.

When AirLink arrived in the area, the false summit proved insufficient for landing and they diverted to a landing zone about one mile away and 1,500 feet lower in elevation.

At about 9 p.m., the litter team met up with the hasty team at the false summit. Bachelder was packaged into the litter and the SAR team began moving him down the trail to the waiting AirLink helicopter.

At 11:45 p.m., the SAR teams reported they had reached the AirLink Helicopter and passed Bachelder's care off to the flight medics. Bachelder was flown via AirLink to St. Charles Medical Center in Bend for treatment.

The DCSO SAR members then hiked out to the trailhead and returned to Bend, arriving back to their headquarters at about 2:30 a.m.

It proved to be a busy week for SAR personnel.

On August 12, at about 11:25 a.m., Deschutes County Sheriff's Office (DCSO) Search and Rescue (SAR) was dispatched to a report of a climber on North Sister who had a rock collapse during the ascent to the summit, causing an injury that forced the climb to be discontinued.

The climber, Josh Lockerby, 49, who was part of a group of about a dozen Mazama climbers, was provided assistance by the team in beginning the technical descent down the mountain beginning at 10,030 feet of elevation. The summit of North Sister is at 10,085 feet.

AirLink was requested to transport two DCSO SAR Mountain Rescue Unit



PHOTO COURTESY DCSO

A rescue helicopter landed on North Sister to rescue an injured climber on Saturday – the second rescue of the week on the Sisters mountains.

(MRU) teams of two to the saddle between North Sister and Middle Sister to assist the Mazama group in the technical descent. The first MRU team landed at the saddle at about 1:35 p.m. and began their ascent toward Lockerby's location. The second team arrived at the saddle as soon as AirLink was able to fly back to Bend and return.

After DCSO MRU team members made contact with the Mazama group it was determined the injuries sustained by Lockerby would require air transport to a medical facility, if possible, versus the long hike out to the Pole Creek trailhead.

An Army National Guard

Blackhawk helicopter was requested to assist in the rescue of Lockerby from the lower end of the southeast ridge of North Sister. DCSO MRU members, assisted by Mazama members, were able to locate a suitable landing zone to enable the Blackhawk to land at about 1930 hours versus using the hoisting option. Lockerby was then transported to St. Charles Medical Center, arriving at about 7:50 p.m., where he was treated for serious non-life-threatening injuries.

MRU members along with the Mazama group walked back out to the Pole Creek trailhead, arriving at about 10:45 p.m.

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