



Los Angeles County
Sheriff's Department

SHERIFF'S HEADQUARTERS

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www.lasd.org

News Release

At about 6:30PM Saturday, a hiker called the Malibu/Lost Hills Sheriff's Station via cell phone to say he was one of four hikers trapped in the "Rock Pool" area of Malibu Creek State Park and that the water was rising.

Knowing that the ongoing storms had caused the waters of Malibu Creek State Park to change to a raging river, over 30 Los Angeles County Sheriff's Malibu Search and Rescue (SAR) Team members, LA County Fire Dept. Urban Search and Rescue team members and LA County Fire Dept. Lifeguards Swift Water Rescue Team members and firefighters responded with Lost Hills Sheriff's Station deputies to attempt the rescue.

The storm had caused weather conditions that were terrible for hiking and the rescue effort was considered to be high risk.

Rescuers had to use four wheel drive vehicles to access the remote area, then climb rocks and hike the rest of the way across slippery rocks and trails that crumbled under their feet due to days of heavy rains.

Rescuers reported about 8:00PM that the water was rising with each intermittent rainfall, and the hikers were trapped by the raging waters with no way out. There was serious concern the hikers could be overcome and drown before rescuers could reach them.

Due to cloud cover and nightfall, the remote wilderness area was completely dark and the only lighting available to rescuers was what they carried, including small lights on their helmets and flashlights.

The fact that one hiker was able to get cell reception was extraordinary considering the lack of cell towers in the state parks area. The hiker's cell phone battery was draining quickly and was quickly reduced to 20% power even though rescuers were only texting with the hiker to save the hiker's cell battery power.

Throughout the night, in order to get to near the hikers, rescuers drove, then hiked, climbed and ultimately used an inflatable raft to get close to the hikers. While rescuers were able to see one victim's flashlight, they were unable to see the hikers, even as the night wore on into after 2:00AM Sunday.

Meanwhile, multiple rescue helicopters attempted to get to the hikers in an effort to at least help find them and light the area so ground rescuers could get to them and save them. Three different flight crews were not able to get through to the site due to lack of visibility and the high risk of flying into the cliffs.

The Malibu SAR, firefighter and lifeguard ground rescuers continued to inch closer to the hikers, but were slowed by the risk of falling off of the cliff sides or into the raging waters in the dark. The

hikers had a flashlight that ran out of battery in the first few hours of the rescue, leaving the rescuers blinded as to their exact location and the hikers unable to signal them.

Rescuers blew whistles in an effort to help the hikers guide them in, but the raging water made it impossible to hear even each other.

The night wore on until well past midnight. The temperatures had dropped into the mid-40's and kept dropping. Even wearing special clothing, the rescuers were soaked and were feeling the effects of the onset of hypothermia. Meanwhile, the hikers texted they were very cold.

Hypothermia was a threat to everyone, as was the dangerous terrain and raging waters.

Rescuers continued to try to reach the hikers but had run out of options of ways to potentially get to them, as their path was blocked by raging water, cliffs and long drops down the canyon. The quickly rising water had covered paths that had existed earlier that day, allowing the hikers to get stranded.

By 2:30AM Sunday morning, a Ventura County Sheriff's helicopter rescue crew reported they were on the way to attempt to get through the weather and reach the hikers. They were the fourth air crew to consider responding that night. They made a daring effort and flew between cliffs with low visibility and high danger.

The ground rescuers guided the helicopter crew to where the hikers were likely trapped. Hovering between cliffs less than 200 apart, the Ventura Sheriff's flight crew used their spotlight and spotted the four hikers within minutes, just a few hundred yards from the ground rescuers.

The hikers were sitting on a boulder, surrounded by raging waters that nearly touched the huddled and frightened hikers in the dark. A Ventura Sheriff's rescuer was lowered down to the boulder using a hoist, and one by one, the hikers were brought into the safety of the rescue helicopter.

The hikers were flown to the nearby landing zone, treated for the onset of hypothermia and able to return home. The hikers are three men and one woman, 25-26 years old, all from Long Beach.

The four hikers were cited by California State Park Rangers for Unsafe Recreational Activities, 4319 California Code of Regulations, Title 14.

"On the ground and in the air, the bravery and actions shown in this search and rescue was beyond the call of duty," said LA County Sheriff John Scott. "This is one more example of the tremendous life saving capabilities of Los Angeles County Sheriff's Search & Rescue personnel, our partners with the Los Angeles County Fire Department, and in this case the Ventura County Sheriff's Air Support."

Click on the links below for some of the news reports:

Four stranded hikers rescued from rising floodwaters in California

<http://www.cnn.com/2014/03/02/us/california-mudslides/index.html?iref=allsearch>

https://www.dropbox.com/s/fexncvqif715lar/CNN_03-02-2014_06.25.02.mp4

Four Long Beach hikers rescued after being trapped near rising creek at Malibu Creek State Park

<http://www.dailynews.com/general-news/20140302/four-long-beach-hikers-rescued-after-being-trapped-near-rising-creek-at-malibu-creek-state-park>

Rescuers Brave Heavy Storm to Save Stranded Hikers

http://www.malibutimes.com/news/article_3aec4c00-a21e-11e3-a073-001a4bcf887a.html

Throughout the rescue, rescuers including LA Sheriff's Reserve Captain David Katz and Lost Hills Sheriff's Sgt.

Tui Wright provided updates that were sent out via @mpLASD or <https://twitter.com/mpLASD>
Links to some of the messages and PHOTOS are below:

<https://twitter.com/mpLASD/status/440023471532150787/photo/1>

<https://twitter.com/mpLASD/status/440018924155854849/photo/1>

<https://twitter.com/mpLASD/status/440015173651156992/photo/1>

<https://twitter.com/mpLASD/status/439990378117074945/photo/1>

<https://twitter.com/mpLASD/status/440047692211699712/photo/1>

<https://twitter.com/mpLASD/status/440073162407964672/photo/1>

<https://twitter.com/mpLASD/status/440023471532150787/photo/1>

<https://twitter.com/mpLASD/status/440085759169531906/photo/1>

<https://twitter.com/mpLASD/status/440087443522322432/photo/1>

HIKING PLAN SHEET

*Enjoy Nature - Plan your Hike by filling out the Sheriff's Department's HIKING PLAN SHEET:

http://file.lacounty.gov/lasd/cms1_163961.pdf

More information on how to prepare for your hiking / camping trip at the Disease Control's camping website at: <http://www.cdc.gov/family/camping/>

Founded in 1977, the Malibu Search & Rescue Team is an all volunteer organization comprised of Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department Reserve Sheriffs Deputies, a select few Civilian Volunteer Specialists and Incident Support Personnel. Team members volunteer their time and efforts to help others and the team does not charge for rescues. The Team is a unit of the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department and is also a member of the prestigious California region of the Mountain Rescue Association.

Malibu Search and Rescue Team

Malibu / Lost Hills Sheriff's Station

Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department

<http://www.malibusar.org/>

<https://www.facebook.com/MalibuSAR>

<https://twitter.com/MalibuSAR>

* Lost Hills Sheriff's Station polices the Cities of Agoura Hills, Calabasas, Hidden Hills, Malibu and Westlake Village, and the unincorporated communities of Chatsworth Lake Manor, Malibu Lake, Topanga, and West Hills:

Malibu / Lost Hills Sheriff's Station

Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department

27050 Agoura Road

Agoura, CA 91301

(818) 878-1808

Website: www.LostHills.lasd.org

LASD HQ Text and Emails: <http://www.Nixle.com>

<http://nixle.com/lasd---malibulost-hills-station-los-angeles-county-sheriff/>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/LostHillsSheriffsStation>

Twitter <https://twitter.com/LHSLASD>

Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department Search and Rescue Team members are Reserve Sheriff's deputies who volunteer their time to help others for \$1 a year, and who partner with sheriff's civilian volunteers who volunteer for free. There are over 150 members of the eight Search and Rescue teams of the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department. These rescuers were activated for over 550 search and rescue missions last year, making it one of the most active counties for search and rescue missions in the nation. Reserve deputies and civilian volunteers are supervised by full-time sheriff's deputies <http://lasdreserve.org>

Did you know? There are over 850 LASD reserve sheriff's deputies who work patrol, jails, search and rescue, motorcycle patrol, mounted posse, investigations, and more, as team members of the second largest policing agency in the nation.

By:

Captain Mike Parker

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Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department

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Pinterest LASD Photos : <http://pinterest.com/lacountysheriff/>

YouTube LASD Videos: <http://www.youtube.com/user/LACountySheriff/videos?view=0>

Alert LA County: Telephone emergency mass notification system

<http://www.lacounty.gov/wps/portal/alertla>

SNAP LA County: Specific Needs Disaster Voluntary Registry <http://snap.lacounty.gov/>

Text & Email, Register for LASD Nixle messages: To receive more detailed, up-to-date information

via E-MAIL and/or TEXT directly from the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department (LASD), sign up for "Nixle" alerts at <http://www.Nixle.com> and register for "LASD – Headquarters Newsroom (SHB), Los Angeles County Sheriff" AND your local LASD station area. Or, to receive URGENT TEXT ALERTS ONLY, text your zip code to 888777. Standard text messaging rates may apply depending on your calling plan.

"If You See Something, Say Something" ... LA Crime Stoppers: Partner to prevent or report crime by contacting your local Sheriff's station. Or if you wish to remain Anonymous, call "LA Crime Stoppers" by dialing 800-222-TIPS (8477), texting the letters TIPLA plus your tip to CRIMES (274637), or using the website <http://lacrimestoppers.org>

John L. Scott, Sheriff

Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department

For Additional Information Contact:

| Name | Phone | Email |
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