

Winter 2014 Oregon Region Report from the Oregon Mountain Rescue Council

More current information can be found on each team's web site or at the Oregon Mountain Rescue Council's web site at <http://corvallismountainrescue.org/omrc/>

State-Wide Mountain Rescue Volunteer Hours

The following table lists the volunteer hours for mountain rescue training and missions. Unfortunately, the data for 2013 were not available from the State in time for this year's report. The data are pulled from the annual report on search and rescue made by the State of Oregon's Office of Emergency Management, Search and Rescue Program. The data are collected by each county sheriff and report time for mountain rescue team training and missions or time spent in a mountain rescue environment by any SAR asset. The full report can be downloaded at: http://www.oregon.gov/OMD/OEM/Pages/tech_resp/sar.aspx#Statistical_Data_for_Oregon.

Year	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Hours	4,859	6,750	3,672	6,163	7,367	5,543	7,388	12,193	14,705	12,532	8,364

Re-Accreditation Activities

Re-accreditation for 2013 was a new experience for all of the Oregon teams. The Oregon Region started a new re-accreditation program five years ago and 2013 was the final year in the new five year cycle. Due to the odd number of teams in the Region and the odd number of testing modules, 2013 required a re-accreditation in late winter for the snow module for one team and in early summer for the rock and search modules for a second team. Both teams that were tested, Portland Mountain Rescue for technical rock and wilderness search and Hood River Crag Rats for technical snow, passed with flying colors.



Creating, coordinating and running two different re-accreditation events for two different teams was a significant achievement for all of the Oregon Region teams. Eugene Mountain Rescue was the lead team for coordinating the technical snow re-accreditation in April. Then, in May, Corvallis Mountain Rescue Unit coordinated the wilderness search re-accreditation in the morning and Deschutes County Mountain Rescue Unit coordinated the technical rock re-accreditation in the afternoon. As a part of the new re-accreditation program, the evaluation process was extensively changed. Some of the changes included evaluators assigned to a specific set of criteria for the evaluation versus trying to evaluate all aspects of a module. A second large change was to more thoroughly use the recommended evaluation criteria from the MRA (pages 106 – 118 in the latest set of MRA policies). In general, the Oregon Region teams agree that the new evaluation process provides more specific and useful feedback for the team that is being tested and also fosters a re-accreditation environment of learning versus one of fear or a “gothca” attitude from evaluators. There are still bugs to work out, but the new re-accreditation process and evaluation format has been enthusiastically adopted by all of the teams and team members have put a lot of effort into making the new program a success.

As a final note for the Oregon Region, Jerry Heilman, from Corvallis Mountain Rescue Unit, will be moving to the Vice-President position in early 2014 and Don McLaughlin, from Eugene Mountain Rescue, will be taking the reins as President. As the outgoing President, I would like to thank all of the long time volunteers of the Oregon Mountain Rescue Council (OMRC) for their continued efforts to make the Oregon Region a great organization with the high standards expected by our fellow MRA members. Current members of the OMRC

are Don McLaughlin from Eugene Mountain Rescue, Dave Clarke from Portland Mountain Rescue, Scott Linn from Corvallis Mountain Rescue Unit, Paul Dickman from Deschutes County Mountain Rescue Unit, Jay Sherrerd from Hood River Crag Rats, Todd Shechter from Corvallis Mountain Rescue Unit and Jerry Heilman from Corvallis Mountain Rescue Unit. Thanks guys!

Region-Wide Statistics

The following are cumulative values for all Oregon Region teams that provided information for 2013. The numbers from Deschutes County include all SAR activities, not just mountain rescue activities.

Number of Deployable MRA Members = 186

Number of Missions = 128

Number of Training Events = 330

Number of Mission Hours = 10,990

Number of Training Hours = 25,107

Number of Technical Missions = 76

Number of Search Missions = 88

Number of Body Recoveries = 17

Individual Team Reports

The following are individual reports for each Oregon Region team that provided information for 2013.



Corvallis Mountain Rescue Unit

PO Box 116

Corvallis, OR 97339

Email: info@corvallismountainrescue.org

Web: <http://corvallismountainrescue.org/>

Corvallis Mountain Rescue Unit had a good and productive year in 2013. The year was filled with a mix of good trainings, challenging missions, and fun times together.

CMRU was involved with several missions this year ranging from Mt. Hood to Mt. Jefferson to along the McKenzie River. In each of these missions we had the opportunity to work jointly with our sister MRA teams to help search for and coordinate rescue of our subjects.



One mission stands out in 2013, the lengthy search for a missing dentist on Mt Hood in early summer. All Oregon MRA teams participated in this search and in the end were able to provide closure to the subject's family. A job well done by the Oregon MRA teams.

CMRU members participated in two rescues while recreating on their own, one together with the Hood River Crag Rats for a subject injured at the base of a water fall.

Training wise the Unit sponsored a Peak Bagging weekend in June with the goal of getting members up on as many Cascade Range peaks as possible. We had a great weekend and covered 7 Oregon mountains.

CMRU also continued our training relationship with the National Park Service at Crater Lake National Park where we conducted three days of drills, mostly surrounding caldera rescues (simulating a park guest falling into the lake caldera).

CMRU wishes all teams a safe and productive 2014.

Number of Deployable Members = 22

Number of Missions = 13

Number of Training Events = 58

Number of Mission Hours = 594

Number of Training Hours = 2,879

Number of Technical Missions = 4

Number of Search Missions = 11

Number of Body Recoveries = 3



Deschutes County Mountain Rescue Unit

PO Box 5722

Bend, OR 97708

Web: <http://www.dcsarinc.org/default.aspx>

Deschutes Mountain Rescue Unit is organized as a specialty unit under the umbrella of Deschutes County Sheriff's SAR. As a result of this affiliation, the Deschutes MRU members are active in a wide variety of SAR functions in addition to traditional mountain rescue activities. Members participate in medical, swift water, snowmobile, ATV, ground search, winter (snow) missions and overhead functions.

The past year has been largely devoted to building upon our specialty skills sets. We're continuing to work upon our ground up rock climbing rescue skills and cave rescue skills. In June we held a 2 day NCRC Orientation to Cave Rescue Class taught by the Pacific NW regional representative.

The most notable technical mission of the year was of a badly injured climber on the 4th pitch of a 5 pitch climb at Smith Rocks. The climber fell 50' on a failed rappel to the only ledge on a 250' climb. The extraction required a long pickoff and lower, followed by a steep angle lower to a Fire Department handoff.

We joined the other OMRC teams for two re-accreditation events for the Hood River Crag Rats and Portland Mountain Rescue. We assisted in the May search for the Mt. Hood fallen climber and the joint training at Crater Lake.

We are continuing to improve our Task Book training criteria for personnel. A separate Trainee Task Book has been developed and the Support Task Book has been refined. The criterion for Rescue level personnel continues development.

Statistics are from the 2013 winter report to the MRA.

Number of DC SAR Members = 108

Number of DC MRU Members = 24

Number of DC SAR Missions = 89

Number of DC MRU Missions = 42

Number of Training Events = 131

Number of Mission Hours = 6,765

Number of Training Hours = 15,425

Number of Technical Missions = 46

Number of Search Missions = 33

Number of Body Recoveries = 7

Note: Statistics are for all DC SAR activities, not just DC MRU activities.



Eugene Mountain Rescue

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EMR had the same number of missions as last year, but more mission hours. This was probably due to three of our missions being on Mt. Hood, where it was a busy year. Between those three trips, we worked with all of the other Oregon MRA teams, among others, which is always a beneficial experience.

We combined forces with CMRU at Blue Pool again this year in May. Unfortunately this time it was a recovery, not a rescue. Three EMR members, two of whom had just climbed Mt. Hood that day on a team climb, arrived on the scene, where Linn County had a dive team working on recovering the body from the pool. We needed to raise the litter up a 50-ft. cliff. CMRU was en route with a much bigger group, so we arranged for EMR to set up anchors and edge lines and for CMRU to rig their systems on our anchors and take over running the operation when they arrived a short time later. The litter raise went very smoothly, and a team of Lane County scouts wheeled it out 2 miles to the trailhead. In spite of the sad circumstances, it was a pleasure to work with CMRU. This was another case where multiple teams from three different counties worked well together to complete a mission safely and successfully.

In June we had two missions within a couple days of each other for lost/snowbound hikers on the PCT in the Three Sisters Wilderness Area. Both incidents involved cell phone calls for help, and cell phone pings helped to locate the subjects.

One of our more interesting missions occurred in early December. A logger had suffered a tib/fib fracture in a steep creek drainage up the McKenzie River valley and needed to be evacuated. A team of five EMR members responded. They arrived on the scene expecting to do a raise to a landing, but McKenzie Fire Dept. was already there and on the case. They had treated and packaged the subject on a litter, lowered him to Quartz Creek, and needed to get him across. The EMR team rigged a highline to effect the creek crossing.

EMR was responsible for coordinating the snow re-accreditation for the Hood River Crag Rats in April. A team of our members, with assistance from a few members of Douglas County's non-MRA mountain rescue team, set up an avalanche scenario in the White River Glacier canyon on Mt. Hood. Due to the weather conditions (overnight snow and wind), there were real avalanche hazards to evaluate that morning. The Rats had a large turnout and were very impressive in passing the test. The Douglas County team was there mainly to observe an MRA recert, as they are working with other counties to hopefully form a joint Southern Oregon MRA team in the future.

In an effort to get newer members more alpine climbing experience, we put on two team climbs this year, one on Mt. Hood and one on Three Fingered Jack on the day of CMRU's "peak-bagging" event.

In April we once again teamed with the local hiking/climbing club, the Obsidians, to teach a Basic Mountaineering course. We contributed 274 person-hours instructing a couple dozen students. We also contributed 56 hours to other community service projects.

Number of Deployable Members = 33

Number of Missions = 12

Number of Training Events = 31

Number of Mission Hours = 622

Number of Training Hours = 2,247

Number of Technical Missions = 2

Number of Search Missions = 7

Number of Body Recoveries = 1



Hood River Crag Rats

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Rat Review 2013

2013 was a much busier year than usual for the Rats, with one weekend alone in September presenting us with four separate callouts in the Gorge and on Mt Hood. We had three high profile callouts in Hood River County and assisted in others in Clackamas, Skamania and Klickitat counties.

Hood River County sadly saw the loss of two people. In early June, a 25 year old male drowned in the pool below Punchbowl Falls, having jumped 75 ft from the cliffs above. We retrieved his body as well as rescued his friend who had also jumped and had severe hypothermia. In August, a 31 year old Polish climber died from a 1500 ft fall on Mt Hood's north face; his body was not retrieved due to the extremely dangerous conditions at his location, in the line of nearly continuously rock fall within the east couloir of the Hour Glass. His body was completely covered in rock debris within a couple of weeks.

On a happier note, August found us retrieving a 10 year old boy who had fallen about 150 ft down a scree slope in the mid-White River Canyon, resulting in a concussion from severe head injuries. We delivered him to a waiting Life Flight helicopter about 2 AM, following a difficult three mile descent through boulder fields and difficult stream crossings. In late September we rescued a hiker from his entrapment under 18" of fresh snowfall at the 7000 ft level of the west Eliot moraine on Mt Hood. This victim was barely noticeable as we found him

buried in the snow with advanced hypothermia. A fire, fresh clothes and hot liquid brought him around to the point that we could walk him out.

The remainder of the year included searches for several lost hikers/climbers, and retrieval of numerous people with disabling injuries. We assisted PMR and Clackamas County in the August retrieval of a male snowboarder crushed by the a collapsed snow cave on White River Glacier, outside of the Timberline ski area boundaries, and in the search of a lost female climber in March.



We trained hard and passed our avalanche and snow rescue recertification in March above White River Canyon near Timberline Lodge. Other training included CPR, First Aid, high angle techniques, GPS and orienteering, patient packaging and litter techniques, radio operation in difficult terrain (Gorge canyons). Four Rats attended the three day Clackamas County Sheriff's Northwest SARCon held at Camp Kurati.

- Number of Deployable Members = 40
- Number of Missions = 35
- Number of Training Events = 13
- Number of Mission Hours = 1,200
- Number of Training Hours = 847
- Number of Technical Missions = 16
- Number of Search Missions = 19
- Number of Body Recoveries = 1 and 1 not recovered



Portland Mountain Rescue
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In 2013 Portland Mountain Rescue (PMR) saw an increase in our mission workload over 2012. Unfortunately, four of those missions ended with body recoveries.

Visit www.pmru.org/pressroom/summaries.html for a summary of all our mission activity. Our highest profile mission in 2013 was the search and recovery for a missing climber on Mt Hood in June. This lasted for nine days and was a multi-agency effort involving MRA teams from across the Oregon and Washington Regions.

In May PMR was reaccredited by the OMRC in the Search and Rock Disciplines. We participated in 19 Public Education events accounting for 850 education contacts. We donated 228 hours to wilderness clean-up events. PMR only accepts new members every two years and this the second year of our two year academy. Most of the trainees are well on their way to becoming support level members.

Number of Deployable Members = 67

Number of Missions = 26

Number of Training Events = 97

Number of Mission Hours = 1,809

Number of Training Hours = 3,492

Number of Technical Missions = 8

Number of Search Missions = 18

Number of Body Recoveries = 4

