

# Winter 2013 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. 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 reports can be downloaded from the following web site: [http://www.oregon.gov/OMD/OEM/tech\\_resp/sar.shtml](http://www.oregon.gov/OMD/OEM/tech_resp/sar.shtml)

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 2012 was focused on the technical snow module and both teams that were tested, Portland Mountain Rescue and Eugene Mountain Rescue, passed with flying colors.



The snow conditions were a bit touch and go. The day before the scheduled re-accreditation, there was significant snow fall and avalanche activity at the site selected for the scenario. After some late night conference calls to the teams being tested and lots of on the ground searching for a safe snow pack, the re-accreditation was moved to the west slopes of Hayrick Butte, near Santiam Pass, Oregon.

Lots of volunteers from Corvallis Mountain Rescue, Deschutes County Mountain Rescue Unit and Hood River Crag Rats showed up early Saturday morning to help set up the scenario site, welcome the testing teams, and help evaluate the re-accreditation. The effort to create a fake avalanche debris field was especially note worthy. It was hard to distinguish it from the real thing on the other side of the mountain.



The scenario started with a county deputy, with sirens and lights going, pulling up to the testing team and handing them a 911 dispatch form with just the information found in such a form (which is not much). There were a total of four subjects in the field. One was a live subject with a beacon on that could walk out, but was buried to his neck in snow, high on the mountain and hidden in a depression. There was a second live subject that was mid-slope and he had serious medical problems and required a technical evacuation. There was a third subject, a beacon, that was buried quite a few feet down in the debris zone. The beacon had a note on it that let the rescuers know the "subject" was dead. The fourth subject was



a Rescue Randy buried on the up hill side of a tree and did not have a beacon on. Randy had to be found using probing and this proved to be quite a challenge. All in all, it was a pretty demanding scenario, but the people from PMR and EMR did great solving all of the problems and taking care of the subjects.

The re-accreditation closed with a great pot luck provided by Eugene Mountain Rescue. There was a bit of beer consumed along with the great food and everyone had a chance to debrief the day and learn from watching some real pros at action.

## Region-Wide Statistics

The following are cumulative values for all Oregon Region teams that provided information for 2012. The numbers from Deschutes County include all SAR activities, not just mountain rescue activities.

Number of Deployable MRA Members = 269  
Number of Missions = 157  
Number of Training Events = 355  
Number of Mission Hours = 9,414  
Number of Training Hours = 25,089  
Number of Technical Missions = 71  
Number of Search Missions = 78  
Number of Body Recoveries = 14

## Individual Team Reports

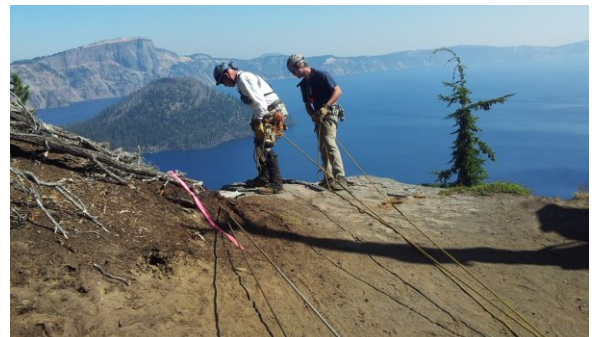
The following are individual reports for each Oregon Region team that provided information for 2012.



**Corvallis Mountain Rescue Unit**  
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Corvallis Mountain Rescue Unit had a fun and productive 2012, expanding our team and continuing to refine and enhance skills.

The Unit was involved with several missions during the year, taking members into Washington State twice, Mount Hood three times, and many other locations around Oregon. One particular mission stood out where members arrived on scene while another MRA team was mid-face on a vertical raise. Both teams immediately gelled together to complete the raise, a tribute to previous joint trainings and events held between units.



Over the course of the year, the Unit welcomed in seven new trainee members who have added a great deal of experience and skill to our roster. Trainings were a good mix of bringing new members up to speed and expanding existing members knowledge.

The Unit enjoyed coordinating a March winter recertification for two other MRA teams through challenging snow and wind conditions in the Oregon Cascades. Later in the year, the Unit participated in a joint cave rescue training with other Oregon MRA teams where rescue skills were practiced underground in a challenging environment.



CMRU wishes all other teams a safe and productive 2013.

- Number of Deployable Members = 23
- Number of Missions = 20
- Number of Training Events = 48
- Number of Mission Hours = 501
- Number of Training Hours = 2,149
- Number of Technical Missions = 9
- Number of Search Missions = 17
- Number of Body Recoveries = 5



**Deschutes County Mountain Rescue Unit**  
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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've built upon our ground up rock climbing rescue skills and made progress in expanding our cave rescue capabilities. The year was unusual in that we had none of the technical rock extractions that normally occur.

The team hosted the Oregon Region Joint Training in September and provided an Introduction to Cave Rescue session. The event was well received and exposed 50 members from around the state to the awkward and

technical problems of working underground. We are trying to raise the awareness that certain skills are transferable between the specialties as well as provide for a SAR problem that will surely occur in our area some day.

We have instituted a Task Book training criteria for Support Level personnel. This system clearly defines needed skill proficiencies via check offs for Trainees to attain promotions.

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.



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EMR completed its second reaccreditation year with a successful snow recert in March. This was our first time through the new 2-year cycle, and members were fairly burned out by two years of recert emphasis by the time it was over. Congrats to PMR for also passing, and kudos to CMRU, Deschutes, and the Rats for planning and organizing, and pulling off a last-minute change of venue due to very real avy conditions.

In April we assisted a local hiking/climbing club, the Obsidians, with a Basic Mountaineering course that is offered every year or two. We contributed about 250 person-hours in teaching a couple dozen students. We also contributed about 100 hours to other community service projects.

We had a noteworthy mission in July where a young woman took a big fall into Blue Pool on the McKenzie River. Due to her injuries and location down a 60-foot cliff, she needed to be evacuated on a litter. This required our full-blown vertical lower/raise system, which was set up by only three people, fortunately some of our most experienced members. As they were starting the raise with the assistance of some local volunteer firefighters, a team of CMRU members arrived and provided valuable and timely assistance with edge protection and negotiating a difficult edge transition. They had been training up at Santiam Pass and learned about the incident from radio traffic. A couple more EMR members who are paramedics arrived, and they hooked the patient up with an IV. Ground search teams also arrived from Lane and Linn Counties in case the subject had to be carried out, but she was hoisted out instead by an Air National Guard Blackhawk. As mentioned in the CMRU section, it was a great team effort that demonstrated the value of practicing and working together.

There were two reconnaissance missions in July and August to try to relocate a deceased climber on the west face of North Sister. He had suffered a fatal fall the previous September. We had located him at the time but he was in too dangerous a location, due to rockfall, to attempt a recovery. A powerful spotting scope and tripod

were used on both missions this year from a rock island in the Collier Glacier and some 20x zoom photos were taken and studied, but we were unable to locate him again. We will continue our efforts on this case in the coming years.

- Number of Deployable Members = 40
- Number of Missions = 12
- Number of Training Events = 25
- Number of Mission Hours = 510
- Number of Training Hours = 2,451
- Number of Technical Missions = 7
- Number of Search Missions = 9
- Number of Body Recoveries = 0



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Rat review ~ 2012

The Hood River Crag Rats celebrated their 87<sup>th</sup> year of SAR operations with 16 missions and 15 rescues! Though several of the 2012 missions required immediate, on-site medical attention, one rescue in particular ultimately proved life saving.

On the morning of June 9, 2012, a 57 y/o woman was found on Eagle Creek trail about 5 miles up. She had been out all night and was unresponsive, hypoglycemic and hypothermic. Seven Crag Rats responded. The first Medi-Rat on scene put in an IV and delivered two doses of D50 (sugar). The subject was then put in a sleeping bag and was packaged in a litter / stokes. Upon reaching the trail head 2 hours later, the team transferred the patient to EMT personnel for delivery into Portland Emanuel Hospital. During transport, the patient's core temperature was recorded at 83.7. This story had a happy ending with the patient 'waking' up the following day and making a full recovery.



The Crag Rats had several fantastic trainings in 2012 too. In addition to the organizations core training, several Rats were able to participate in joint training / educational opportunities this last year. Some of these included SMS training, Winter Re-Certification, Avalanche and Cave Training. The shared knowledge and honing of

skills with other organizations is extremely valuable and the Rats appreciate the time, energy and effort of all those that participate in these events and especially appreciate the event coordinators!

Finally, the Rats were pleased to accept a few exceptionally qualified new members in 2012. The skill sets and enthusiasm they bring are great additions to our team.

Number of Deployable Members = 34

Number of Missions = 16

Number of Training Events = 19

Number of Mission Hours = 530

Number of Training Hours = 890

Number of Technical Missions = 4

Number of Search Missions = 6

Number of Body Recoveries = 0



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In 2012 Portland Mountain Rescue (PMR) participated in a similar number and composition of missions as in 2011. The one notable change was a nearly threefold increase in the number of climbing related missions (2011 was exceptionally low). Unfortunately, two of those missions ended with body recoveries.

Visit <http://www.pmru.org/pressroom/summaries.html> for a summary of all our mission activity.

In March PMR completed the MRA snow recertification. This was the major reason for a 65% increase in training events and a 25% increase in training hours from last year. In addition to all the training, members put on 23 Public Education events (204 hours) and donated more than 200 hours to wilderness clean-up events.

PMR only accepts new members every two years and this was a recruiting year. We had more than two dozen applicants and after extensive screening and field testing we accepted twelve new trainees. This is by far the largest and most talented trainee class in recent memory.

Number of Deployable Members = 64

Number of Missions = 20

Number of Training Events = 132

Number of Mission Hours = 1,108

Number of Training Hours = 4,174

Number of Technical Missions = 5

Number of Search Missions = 13

Number of Body Recoveries = 2