



FS Agreement No. 23-MU-11051400-048

Cooperator Agreement No. \_\_\_\_\_

**MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING  
Between The  
COUNTY OF SISKIYOU  
And The  
USDA, FOREST SERVICE  
SHASTA-TRINITY NATIONAL FOREST**

This MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING (MOU) is hereby made and entered into by and between The County of Siskiyou, hereinafter referred to as "Siskiyou County Sheriff," and the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), Forest Service, Shasta-Trinity National Forest, hereinafter referred to as the "U.S. Forest Service."

Background: This MOU describes the functional relationship between the parties and defines the supporting activities of the US Forest Service to the Siskiyou County Sheriff's Department in fulfillment of the mutual public duty to render assistance in emergency situations within Siskiyou County on the Shasta-Trinity National Forest.

Title: Siskiyou County Search and Rescue Cooperation

**I. PURPOSE:** The purpose of this MOU is to document the cooperation between the parties to participate and assist in Search and Rescue operations and related activities as detailed below, in Attachment A, "Mt. Shasta and Castle Crags Wilderness Search and Rescue Plan." and Attachment B "List of Representatives," in accordance with the following provisions.

**II. STATEMENT OF MUTUAL BENEFIT AND INTERESTS:**

It is hereby recognized and acknowledged that the parties hold it mutually beneficial to cooperate for the purpose of fulfilling our public obligation to enhance the public health and safety on the public lands administered by the Shasta-Trinity National Forest within Siskiyou County. Furthermore, the cooperation of the parties strengthens the responsiveness in rendering assistance to the public during emergency situations as well as the coordination of public resources in such events.

Applicable provisions to this agreement include:

A. State of California Government Code 26614.5 assigns the primary responsibility and administration of search and rescue activities within the County to the Siskiyou County Sheriff.



B. 16 U.S.C 575 authorizes the Secretary of Agriculture to incur such expenses as may be necessary in searching for persons lost in the National Forest and in transporting persons seriously ill, injured, or who die within the National Forest to the nearest places where the sick or injured person, or the body, may be transferred to interested parties or local authorities. No additional costs to the U.S. Forest Service will be incurred by this MOU outside of normal operating duties of the climbing rangers, in their normally assigned Incident Command role(s).

C. Forest Service Manual (FSM) 1599.03 defines the role of the U.S. Forest Service during search and rescue activities as one of support and cooperation with local authorities. A temporary lead role for the U.S. Forest Service is authorized until relieved by the Siskiyou County Sheriff.

D. 36 CFR 293.6 (c) authorizes the Chief, Forest Service, to prescribe the conditions under which motorized equipment, mechanical transport, aircraft, installations, or structures may be used by officers, employees, agencies, or agents of the Federal, State, and county governments in designated Wilderness in emergencies involving the health and safety of persons, damage to property, or other purposes.

In consideration of the above premises, the parties agree as follows:

### **III. THE SISIYOU COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE SHALL:**

- A. Assume the leadership role for search and rescue on Shasta-Trinity National Forest system lands within the County. Assign an Incident Commander for every incident
- B. Designate County personnel or representatives, other than those identified in 'Section V. Provision G. Principal Contacts' of this MOU who are authorized to request or receive services under this agreement. The list of representatives in **Attachment B** is hereby made a part of this MOU and shall be updated as personnel changes occur.
- C. Provide timely notification to the U.S. Forest Service representative of all searches and rescues, fatalities, and/or accidents on or resulting from activities on National Forest system lands or facilities within the County.
- D. Coordinate all search and rescue activity conducted within designated Wilderness areas (Castle Crags and Mt. Shasta) with the U.S. Forest Service contacts listed in 'Section V. Provision G. Principal Contacts' and the attached list of representatives.
- E. Request pre-authorization for the use of motorized equipment or mechanical transport of the sick or injured within the Mt. Shasta or Castle Crags Wilderness areas. The primary designee shall be the U.S. Forest Service listed in 'Section V.



- Provision G. Principal Contacts' and the attached list of representatives (Attachment B).
- F. Adhere to the Wilderness Approval Guidelines for the use of Motorized and Mechanical Equipment for Search and Rescue within designated wilderness areas hereby incorporated as **Attachment A**, "Mt. Shasta and Castle Crags Wilderness Search and Rescue Plan."
  - G. Coordinate and authorize all incident media contacts.
  - H. Notify next of kin or families of injured victims. Coordinate incident operations involving U.S. Forest Service employees directly with the primary designee listed in 'Section V. Provision G. Principal Contacts' or representatives. The U.S. Forest Service will assume the lead role on notification matters in situations involving U.S. Forest Service employees.

#### **IV. THE U.S. FOREST SERVICE SHALL:**

- A. Assign an Incident Liaison for every incident or enter into a unified command structure as determined by the Incident Commander and agreed upon by the parties.
- B. Assume the incident commander role in any search and rescue emergency in which immediate and quick response will reduce suffering and/or save lives. The concept of "closest forces" will be mutually established in order to improve operational efficiency and hasten response times.
- C. Immediately notify the Siskiyou County Sheriff, his designee, or Sheriff's Dispatch of any reported search and rescue requests or activity.
- D. Relinquish the incident commander role at the time of notification, provided that the parties mutually agree that continued U.S. Forest Service incident leadership will reduce additional harm and suffering. The U.S. Forest Service role in accident scene command, transport, or immediate patient medical care may continue once transfer of command has occurred as necessary and as directed by the Incident Commander.
- E. After transferring the leadership role, the U.S. Forest Service shall assume a supportive role and provide assistance to the fullest extent possible. Furnish personnel, equipment and supplies in support of the Siskiyou County Sheriff as available, until relieved by the Incident Commander.
- F. Upon the request of the Siskiyou County Sheriff, and within U.S. Forest Service authorities, make available the following resources and services during the incident:



- a. Assistance with communications through the U.S. Forest Service communications system.
  - b. Qualified field personnel and provide guide services as available.
  - c. Available and qualified U.S. Forest Service personnel for Incident Command positions using the Incident Command System structure.
  - d. Incident support equipment as available.
  - e. Arranging for pack stock or other forms of ground transportation when available and necessary.
  - f. Maps, aerial photographs, or other U.S. Forest Service information products as available.
  - g. Public information services and media liaison services.
  - h. Avalanche hazard or avalanche weather forecasting.
- G. Notify an agency Helicopter Liaison or qualified Helicopter Manager when U.S. Forest Service employees are requested to participate in aviation related missions. All U.S. Forest Service participation in aviation operations will adhere to the Interagency Helicopter Operations Guide standards and protocols listed in Attachment A.
- H. Provide the Siskiyou County Sheriff with a copy of the U.S. Forest Service's Mt. Shasta and Castle Crags Wilderness Search and Rescue Plan, dated May 16, 2022 made a part of this MOU as **Attachment A**.
- I. Coordinate routine meetings and communication with the parties engaged in SAR activities on Shasta-Trinity National Forest lands within the County. At least one meeting/tabletop exercise will be held each year prior to the normal start of the mountaineering season on Mt. Shasta.
- J. Assist with technical training and assistance as available and when requested for employees, volunteers, or other participants in the SAR obligations of the Siskiyou County Sheriff's Department. Specific technical training may include general mountaineering, snow/ice rescue, avalanche awareness or avalanche rescue techniques.
- V. IT IS MUTUALLY UNDERSTOOD AND AGREED BY AND BETWEEN THE PARTIES THAT:**
- A. The U.S. Forest Service and the Siskiyou County Sheriff agree to review and assess the effectiveness of this MOU annually.
  - B. The concept of "closest forces" shall be used. The Incident Command role will be maintained by the U.S. Forest Service only until the Siskiyou County Sheriff is available to assume its command.



- C. When the Siskiyou County Sheriff requests volunteers from the U.S. Forest Service, the volunteers become the agents of the Sheriff, and expenses will be borne personally by said volunteers.
- D. Motorized equipment and mechanical transport may be authorized within National Forest Wilderness areas when an emergency condition exists which involves the health and safety of human beings and including the removal of deceased persons. The coordination of such use will be reviewed at the annual meeting and/or as required on a case-by-case basis. Attachment A will serve as the currently agreed upon guidelines for SAR using motorized equipment or mechanical transport within designated wilderness areas.
- E. The U.S. Forest Service and the Siskiyou County Sheriff will mutually inform and share information on important events, developments, and decision making related to Search and Rescue operations during incidents, such as the termination or abandonment of rescue efforts.
- F. The parties will mutually communicate and collaborate on SAR issues, techniques, education, prevention, training, media releases, and coordination of allied agency and volunteer support on Shasta-Trinity National Forest lands within Siskiyou County.
- G. **PRINCIPAL CONTACTS.** Individuals listed below are authorized to act in their respective areas for matters related to this agreement.

**Principal Cooperator Contacts:**

<b>Cooperator Program Contact</b>	<b>Cooperator Administrative Contact</b>
Name: Sam Woods Address: 305 Butte Street City, State, Zip: Yreka, CA 96097 Telephone: (530) 598-2948 FAX: (530) 842-8356 Email: <a href="mailto:swoods@co.siskiyou.ca.us">swoods@co.siskiyou.ca.us</a>	Name: Jeremiah LaRue Address: 305 Butte Street City, State, Zip: Yreka, CA 96097 Telephone: (530) 598-4200 FAX: (530) 842-8356 Email: <a href="mailto:jlarue@co.siskiyou.ca.us">jlarue@co.siskiyou.ca.us</a>

**Principal U.S. Forest Service Contacts:**

<b>U.S. Forest Service Program Manager Contact</b>	<b>U.S. Forest Service Administrative Contact</b>
Name: Nicklaus Meyers Address: 204 West Alma Street City, State, Zip: Mount Shasta, CA 96067 Telephone: 775-223-3445 FAX: Email: <a href="mailto:Nicklaus.Meyers@usda.gov">Nicklaus.Meyers@usda.gov</a>	Name: Rachel Ellison, Grants Management Specialist Address: 1323 Club Drive City, State, Zip: Vallejo, CA 94592 Email: <a href="mailto:Rachel.Ellison@usda.gov">Rachel.Ellison@usda.gov</a>



Name: Carolyn Napper Address: 204 West Alma Street City, State, Zip: Mount Shasta, CA 96067 Telephone: 530-962-9620 FAX: Email: Carolyn.Napper@usda.gov	
--	--

H. ASSURANCE REGARDING FELONY CONVICTION OR TAX DELINQUENT STATUS FOR CORPORATE ENTITIES. This agreement is subject to the provisions contained in the Department of Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 2012, P.L. No. 112-74, Division E, Section 433 and 434 regarding corporate felony convictions and corporate federal tax delinquencies. Accordingly, by entering into this agreement Siskiyou County Sheriff acknowledges that it: 1) does not have a tax delinquency, meaning that it is not subject to any unpaid Federal tax liability that has been assessed, for which all judicial and administrative remedies have been exhausted or have lapsed, and that is not being paid in a timely manner pursuant to an agreement with the authority responsible for collecting the tax liability, and (2) has not been convicted (or had an officer or agent acting on its behalf convicted) of a felony criminal violation under any Federal law within 24 months preceding the agreement, unless a suspending and debarring official of the USDA has considered suspension or debarment is not necessary to protect the interests of the Government. If the Siskiyou County Sheriff fails to comply with these provisions, the U.S. Forest Service will annul this agreement and may recover any funds Siskiyou County Sheriff has expended in violation of sections 433 and 434.

I. NOTICES. Any communications affecting the operations covered by this agreement given by the U.S. Forest Service or Siskiyou County Sheriff is sufficient only if in writing and delivered in person, mailed, or transmitted electronically by e-mail or fax, as follows:

To the U.S. Forest Service Program Manager, at the address specified in the MOU.

To Siskiyou County Sheriff, at Cooperator’s address shown in the MOU or such other address designated within the MOU.

Notices are effective when delivered in accordance with this provision, or on the effective date of the notice, whichever is later.

J. PARTICIPATION IN SIMILAR ACTIVITIES. This MOU in no way restricts the U.S. Forest Service or Siskiyou County Sheriff from participating in similar activities with other public or private agencies, organizations, and individuals.



- K. ENDORSEMENT. Any of Siskiyou County Sheriff's contributions made under this MOU do not by direct reference or implication convey U.S. Forest Service endorsement of Siskiyou County Sheriff's products or activities.
- L. NONBINDING AGREEMENT. This MOU creates no right, benefit, or trust responsibility, substantive or procedural, enforceable by law or equity. The parties shall manage their respective resources and activities in a separate, coordinated and mutually beneficial manner to meet the purpose(s) of this MOU. Nothing in this MOU authorizes any of the parties to obligate or transfer anything of value.

Specific, prospective projects or activities that involve the transfer of funds, services, property, and/or anything of value to a party requires the execution of separate agreements and are contingent upon numerous factors, including, as applicable, but not limited to: agency availability of appropriated funds and other resources; cooperator availability of funds and other resources; agency and cooperator administrative and legal requirements (including agency authorization by statute); etc. This MOU neither provides, nor meets these criteria. If the parties elect to enter into an obligation agreement that involves the transfer of funds, services, property, and/or anything of value to a party, then the applicable criteria must be met. Additionally, under a prospective agreement, each party operates under its own laws, regulations, and/or policies, and any Forest Service obligation is subject to the availability of appropriated funds and other resources. The negotiation, execution, and administration of these prospective agreements must comply with all applicable law.

Nothing in this MOU is intended to alter, limit, or expand the agencies' statutory and regulatory authority.

- M. USE OF U.S. FOREST SERVICE INSIGNIA. In order for Siskiyou County Sheriff to use the U.S. Forest Service insignia on any published media, such as a Web page, printed publication, or audiovisual production, permission must be granted from the U.S. Forest Service's Office of Communications. A written request must be submitted and approval granted in writing by the Office of Communications (Washington Office) prior to use of the insignia.
- N. MEMBERS OF U.S. CONGRESS. Pursuant to 41 U.S.C. 22, no U.S. member of, or U.S. delegate to, Congress shall be admitted to any share or part of this agreement, or benefits that may arise therefrom, either directly or indirectly.
- O. FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT (FOIA). Public access to MOU or agreement records must not be limited, except when such records must be kept confidential and would have been exempted from disclosure pursuant to Freedom of Information regulations (5 U.S.C. 552).



- P. TEXT MESSAGING WHILE DRIVING. In accordance with Executive Order (EO) 13513, "Federal Leadership on Reducing Text Messaging While Driving," any and all text messaging by Federal employees is banned: a) while driving a Government owned vehicle (GOV) or driving a privately owned vehicle (POV) while on official Government business; or b) using any electronic equipment supplied by the Government when driving any vehicle at any time. All cooperators, their employees, volunteers, and contractors are encouraged to adopt and enforce policies that ban text messaging when driving company owned, leased or rented vehicles, POVs or GOVs when driving while on official Government business or when performing any work for or on behalf of the Government.
- Q. SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY AGREEMENTS WITH FOREIGN GOVERNMENTS: Participants recognize that cooperative activities conducted under this memorandum of understanding (MOU) fall within the scope and are subject to the provisions of the science and technology (S&T) [insert S&T agreement country]. A Participant should notify, entities that are conducting cooperative activities under this MOU for or on behalf of that Participant that the provisions of the S&T agreement [insert country] apply to such activities.
- R. SUB-AWARDS SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY AGREEMENTS WITH FOREIGN GOVERNMENTS: Participants recognize that cooperative activities conducted under this memorandum of understanding (MOU) by foreign governments or foreign government instrumentalities fall within the scope and are subject to the provisions of the science and technology (S&T) [insert S&T agreement country] A Participant should notify foreign governments and foreign government instrumentalities that are conducting cooperative activities under this MOU for or on behalf of that Participant that the provisions of the S&T agreement [insert Country] apply to such activities.
- S. TRIBAL EMPLOYMENT RIGHTS ORDINANCE (TERO) The U.S. Forest Service recognizes and honors the applicability of the Tribal laws and ordinances developed under the authority of the Indian Self-Determination and Educational Assistance Act of 1975 (PL 93-638).
- T. PUBLIC NOTICES. It is the U.S. Forest Service's policy to inform the public as fully as possible of its programs and activities. Siskiyou County Sheriff is encouraged to give public notice of the receipt of this agreement and, from time to time, to announce progress and accomplishments. Press releases or other public notices should include a statement substantially as follows:

"The Shasta-Trinity National Forest of the U.S. Forest Service, Department of Agriculture, in partnership with the Siskiyou County Sheriff's Department work collaboratively together in an effort to provide quality search and rescue operations on National Forest System lands within Siskiyou County."





Siskiyou County Sheriff may call on the U.S. Forest Service's Office of Communication for advice regarding public notices. Siskiyou County Sheriff is requested to provide copies of notices or announcements to the U.S. Forest Service Program Manager and to The U.S. Forest Service's Office of Communications as far in advance of release as possible.

- U. U.S. FOREST SERVICE ACKNOWLEDGED IN PUBLICATIONS, AUDIOVISUALS AND ELECTRONIC MEDIA. Siskiyou County Sheriff shall acknowledge U.S. Forest Service support in any publications, audiovisuals, and electronic media developed as a result of this MOU.
- V. NONDISCRIMINATION STATEMENT – PRINTED, ELECTRONIC, OR AUDIOVISUAL MATERIAL. Siskiyou County Sheriff shall include the following statement, in full, in any printed, audiovisual material, or electronic media for public distribution developed or printed with any Federal funding.

*In accordance with Federal law and U.S. Department of Agriculture policy, this institution is prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, or disability. (Not all prohibited bases apply to all programs.)*

**To file a complaint of discrimination, write USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, Room 326-W, Whitten Building, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 20250-9410 or call (202) 720-5964 (voice and TDD). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.**

If the material is too small to permit the full statement to be included, the material must, at minimum, include the following statement, in print size no smaller than the text:

*"This institution is an equal opportunity provider."*

- W. TERMINATION. Any of the parties, in writing, may terminate this MOU in whole, or in part, at any time before the date of expiration.
- X. DEBARMENT AND SUSPENSION. The Siskiyou County Sheriff shall immediately inform the U.S. Forest Service if they or any of their principals are presently excluded, debarred, or suspended from entering into covered transactions with the federal government according to the terms of 2 CFR Part 180. Additionally, should Siskiyou County Sheriff or any of their principals receive a transmittal letter or other official Federal notice of debarment or suspension, then they shall notify the U.S. Forest Service without undue delay. This applies whether the exclusion, debarment, or suspension is voluntary or involuntary.



Y. MODIFICATIONS. Modifications within the scope of this MOU must be made by mutual consent of the parties, by the issuance of a written modification signed and dated by all properly authorized, signatory officials, prior to any changes being performed. Requests for modification should be made, in writing, at least 30 days prior to implementation of the requested change.

Z. COMMENCEMENT/EXPIRATION DATE. This MOU is executed as of the date of the last signature and is effective through August 1, 2028 at which time it will expire.

AA. AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVES. By signature below, each party certifies that the individuals listed in this document as representatives of the individual parties are authorized to act in their respective areas for matters related to this MOU.

In witness whereof, the parties hereto have executed this MOU as of the last date written below.

---

JEREMIAH LARUE, Sheriff – Coroner  
Siskiyou County Sheriff’s Office

Date

---

RACHEL BIRKEY, Forest Supervisor  
U.S. Forest Service, Shasta-Trinity National Forest

Date

The authority and format of this agreement have been reviewed and approved for signature.

8/30/2023

---

GENEVIEVE VILLEMAIRE  
U.S. Forest Service Grants Management Specialist

Date

Burden Statement

According to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, an agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a valid OMB control number. The valid OMB control number for this information collection is 0596-0217. The time required to complete this information collection is estimated to average 3 hours per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination in all its programs and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, and where applicable, sex, marital status, familial status, parental status, religion, sexual orientation, genetic information, political beliefs,



reprisal, or because all or part of an individual's income is derived from any public assistance. (Not all prohibited bases apply to all programs.) Persons with disabilities who require alternative means for communication of program information (Braille, large print, audiotape, etc.) should contact USDA's TARGET Center at 202-720-2600 (voice and TDD).

To file a complaint of discrimination, write USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 20250-9410 or call toll free (866) 632-9992 (voice). TDD users can contact USDA through local relay or the Federal relay at (800) 877-8339 (TDD) or (866) 377-8642 (relay voice). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

# **Attachment A**

## **Mt. Shasta and Castle Crags Wilderness Search and Rescue Plan**

**United States Forest Service, Shasta-Trinity National Forest  
Shasta McCloud Management Unit  
May 2022**

### **Contents**

**Introduction**

**USFS Responsibility and Authority**

**USFS Incident Management**

**USFS Position Responsibilities**

**Helicopter SAR Operations**

**Approval Guidelines for use of Motorized Equipment in Wilderness SAR**

## **Introduction**

### **Purpose**

This plan establishes responsibilities and guidelines for USFS employees for the proper execution of search and rescue (SAR) missions in the Mt. Shasta and Castle Crag Wilderness areas.

### **Physical Description**

Mt. Shasta is a massive compound strato volcano composed of four overlapping cones; geologists estimate its age to be 350,000 years old. Mt. Shasta is the largest volcano in the Cascade Range, with a total volume of 80 cubic miles. It also has one of the greatest base to summit rises of any mountain in the lower 48 states. Due to its great size, Mt. Shasta intensifies existing weather conditions and major storms can occur at any time of the year. Even on clear days, 60 plus mile per hour winds are not uncommon during summer months, with greater wind speeds occurring in winter. Temperatures can be extreme, with high day-to-night fluctuations.

Mt. Shasta rises to a height of 14,179 feet from a base of approximately 3500 feet. Most hikers, skiers and climbers begin their ascent from trailheads at approximately 7,000 feet. Since most visitors live at or near sea level elevations, Acute Mountain Sickness (AMS) is common at mid-elevations (9- 10,000 feet). High Altitude Cerebral Edema (HACE) and High Altitude Pulmonary Edema (HAPE) have required medical evacuations or been a factor in fatal accidents.

There are eight named glaciers on Mt. Shasta, containing numerous crevasses, ice falls, seracs, bergschrunds and other obstacles. In addition to glaciers, there are steep snow and ice fields offering challenging climbing. These hazards demand technical climbing skills and experience, especially of rescuers.

Snow avalanches occur frequently on Mt. Shasta, with small sluffs to huge destructive slides during the fall, winter and spring. In summer, snow avalanches are less common, but rock fall becomes a major hazard, continuing into autumn.

### **Recreational Use**

Mt. Shasta draws thousands of visitors to hike, climb, ski and ride on the mountain every year. The mountain is an iconic feature of the landscape of Northern California. It has been identified "one of the 10 best ski mountains in the world" by several writers and is the focus of consistent interest by the media, and the general public. Additionally, the mountain is identified as both spiritually and culturally significant by a several Native American tribes and by a variety of "New Age" groups. Presently, approximately 7000 people attempt the peak annually; the actual success rate hovers around 50% reaching the summit. Two to three times that number visits the wilderness in a typical year.

The number of search and rescues missions has fluctuated over the years. On average, 12 SARs occur yearly that consists mostly of all rescues and occasionally a fatality. Injuries included fractures, sprains, dislocations, frostbite, cerebral edema, punctures, lacerations, hematomas, etc.

The Mt. Shasta Wilderness is a mountaineering destination wilderness area. The unparalleled ease of access attracts visitors with a wide variety of skill levels and experience with climbing and mountaineering techniques in a high elevation environment with significant objective hazards.

Climbing conditions can range from benign to severe on a day-to-day basis. With few exceptions, there is quality cell phone coverage on all sides of the mountain. Under fair conditions, Mt. Shasta is an accessible goal for many climbers. When conditions are poor, climbing Mt. Shasta is a formidable mountaineering challenge with a high degree of risk.

## **Forest Service Responsibility**

Pursuant to 16 USC 575, the Secretary of Agriculture is authorized to “incur such expenses as may be necessary in searching for persons lost within the National Forests or to provide transportation to persons seriously ill, injured, or who die within the National Forests, to the nearest place where the sick or injured person(s) may be transferred to interested parties or local authorities.” The primary responsibility, however, is that of the County Sheriff and although the Forest Service may be the first on the scene, the search and rescue responsibility will be under the umbrella of County authority. Forest Service policy at FSM 1599.03 allows the FS to assume a temporary lead role as incident command in the case of any search and rescue emergency on National Forest lands. The lead role is maintained until such time as the local authority can assume its leadership.

The Mt. Shasta Wilderness (MSW) is managed by the Shasta McCloud Management Unit, (SMMU) Shasta-Trinity National Forest. SMMU currently employs two year-round wilderness/avalanche center employees and 2-3 seasonal climbing rangers to provide climbing route information, safe climbing information, avalanche /weather forecasting and education, information on clothing and equipment, low impact climbing and camping information and wilderness ethics. Additionally, rangers patrol the mountain's popular climbing routes to remove garbage waste, provide the above information and provide assistance to climbers when needed. Each year, a high camp is often established to support these operations.

In most emergency incidents within the Mt. Shasta Wilderness, USFS Wilderness Climbing Rangers are the first emergency care providers on scene. The Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Siskiyou County Sherriff Department recognizes that USFS personnel are often the nearest public agency available to the Wilderness area and can take prompt initial action in the event of emergency incidents. The present MOU also states that the USFS will “relinquish the temporary lead role at the time of notification, provided that the parties mutually agree that continued Forest Service incident leadership will reduce additional harm and suffering. The Forest Service role in accident scene command, transport, or immediate patient medical care may continue once transfer of command has occurred as necessary and as directed by the Incident Commander”.

USFS Climbing Rangers are trained as emergency medical responders. They are proficient with crampons and ice axe, glacier travel, knowledge of crevasse rescue systems, snow and ice anchors, working knowledge in belays and rappels, low and high angle rescue techniques and avalanche search and rescue. All Climbing Rangers are required to obtain training in S- 271 (Interagency Helicopter Crew Member) and Interagency Aviation Training (IAT) in basic helicopter operations. Climbing Rangers climb to higher elevations on the mountain regularly and can competently climb and safely descend Mt. Shasta's most difficult routes. Climbing Rangers are fit and acclimatized to the mountain's thin air.

## **Forest Service Incident Management**

USFS SAR operations will be managed using the Incident Command System (ICS). At the earliest opportunity, the command of an incident will become the responsibility of the Siskiyou County Sheriff's Office. Until that transition occurs, a designated Forest Service Officer will act as Incident Commander (IC) and will utilize Forest Service personnel and resources, as needed, to complete the mission. When it is determined that more resources are needed to complete the mission, the Sheriff's Office will be notified of this need so they in turn can facilitate the order. In the event of immediate need resource orders, concurrence from the Sheriff's Department is adequate.

When a Climbing Ranger(s) is first on the scene, they may act as IC until relieved by the designated Forest Service Officer or the Sheriff's office. Once relieved as IC, the Climbing Ranger will become Scene Coordinator until relieved by personnel of equal or greater skill, training, experience and knowledge of the area. Situations may occur where the climbing ranger must temporarily assume several roles and may concurrently perform those roles until relieved. As necessary, the Forest Service IC will advise the Sheriff's Office of action taken, facts ascertained, and if the Forest Service can carry action to completion. The Forest Service Officer will remain at the base of operations to assist in communications, to furnish guide service to the scene, and provide recommendations based on knowledge of the area.

## **USFS Incident Position Descriptions**

### **Incident Commander (IC)**

- Ensure the safety of any bystanders and rescuers in all phases of the operation and ensure that the operation is conducted in a safe manner. The IC has the authority to halt any activity that he/she deems unsafe.
- Determine tactical frequency for operations.
- Ascertain the facts and nature of incident, search or rescue, assist, or retrieval.
- Determine the extent and severity of injuries (are they life threatening?)
- Determine the location of injured or last seen area (LSA)
- Notify Sheriff's Office and Duty Officer. If Duty Officer is first notified, the Duty Officer will notify Lead Climbing Ranger, Emergency Command Center (ECC), Resource Officer and other Climbing Rangers.
- Initiates or maintains contact with agency administrator or LEO as necessary.
- Appoint Accident Scene Coordinator if rescuers are not already on scene.
- Determine best method of evacuation: walk, sled, snow machine, helicopter, in collaboration with the Accident Scene Coordinator and lead Climbing Ranger.

- Coordinate need for aviation operations through Sheriff's dispatch. Keep ECC informed of status and need for aviation operations. Coordinate request for wilderness authorization per the guidelines in the Helicopter Operations Plan and Wilderness Approval guidelines.
- Notify a Helicopter Flight Manager if there is a need for USFS employees to fly in cooperator aircraft.
- Maintain communications with Scene Coordinator and other rescuers.
- Advise Sheriff's Office of action taken, action to be taken and whether the Forest Service can carry action to completion.
- Arrange for support supplies and any additional personnel that may be required.
- Manage overall operation.
- Transition to role of Incident Liaison when relieved by Sheriff's IC.
- Document rescue actions during and after the incident is concluded.

### **Accident Scene Coordinator**

- His/her own safety. The Scene Coordinator has the authority to halt any activity that he/she deems unsafe.
- The safety of other rescuers, bystanders and the patient.
- Assessing the scene: safety, location, elevation, and environmental concerns.
- Securing the scene.
- Patient evaluation and stabilization: ABC's, first & secondary surveys, and ongoing patient care.
- Assuming the role of temporary IC until relieved.
- Notify the Incident Commander/Duty Officer/Sheriff's Office who in turn will notify other Climbing Rangers, and the ECC.
- Inform IC of: patient(s) condition (chief complaint, height, weight, medical history and other necessary information), location, on scene rescue personnel and bystanders on the scene, recommendation for evacuation and further action (walk, sled, snow machine, helicopter).
- Determine and transmit need for additional resources (transport, personnel, equipment).
- Coordinating the on-scene evacuation of the victim.



- On-scene assistance with helicopter evacuation operation (See "Helicopter SAR operations for Mt. Shasta) including recommending if a suitable helispot exists, and if the patient can be safely moved to the helispot.
- Document rescue actions during and after the incident is concluded.

### **USFS Incident Liaison**

- Serves as the primary point of contact and coordination of USFS resources once Siskiyou County Sherriff has assumed command.
- Coordinates requests for additional support resources as available.
- Advises Sherriff on USFS protocols, concerns and responsibilities during incidents.
- Facilitates interagency communication during the incident, including communications with agency administrator (s).
- Position may be filled by Lead Climbing Ranger, Resource Officer, Law Enforcement Officer (LEO) or Duty Officer on a case-by-case basis depending on incident resource availability and ability.
- Coordinates or supports media requests with Siskiyou County Public Information Officer (PIO), USFS PIO and Sherriff
- Coordinates After Action Reviews, Critical Incident Stress Debriefing, and other after-incident actions with Sherriff.
- Ensures that incident documentation or reports are completed.

## Helicopter Search and Rescue Operations and Procedures

Helicopter search and rescue operations on Mt. Shasta present unique and special challenges to safe flight operations. Agency aviation risk assessment tools indicate an inherently higher level of aviation risk on Mt. Shasta. Topographic and atmospheric conditions can combine to make the operation critical in terms of safety. In contrast, missions can be completed safely and efficiently, provided that a high degree of pre-planning, risk analysis, and operational management is applied.

All of the following factors may combine to create potentially critical flight operations:

- 14,000' elevations with density altitudes well over 15,000'.
- Erratic and unpredictable wind conditions that can readily result in unpredictable aircraft performance.
- Pilots of search and rescue cooperator aircraft may have limited regular experience in alpine flight operations.
- Aircraft available for the search and rescue mission may have severe power depreciation at higher elevations and density altitudes.
- Landing zones at the higher elevations may be snowfields.
- Visibility and depth perception for pilot and ground crews may be reduced.
- Selected aircraft may not be equipped with snow skids, but rather have wheeled landing gear that makes them especially susceptible to settling in the snow.
- Landing zones change with time. Snowfields soften in the afternoon sun and can contribute to aircraft settling which may in turn increase the risk of rotor strikes or other loss of control.
- A sense of mission urgency. Operations often involve serious injuries with potential for loss of life. This is an aviation mission factor that shouts, "Watch out!"
- Aviation operations for SAR on Mt. Shasta are not regularly under USFS operational control. USFS climbing rangers may participate/interact in operations where unique aircraft, pilots, flight crews and operational procedures may not all be standardized.

**For the above reasons the following Aviation Operations Procedures will apply to all Mt. Shasta Search and Rescue helicopter operations with Forest Service personnel on board.**

1. All Interagency Helicopter Operations Guide (IHOG) requirements as well as Forest Service Manual and Handbook direction will be followed unless specifically detailed below and reviewed in advance by the Forest Aviation Officer. The IHOG describes certain allowable deviations to policy direction during emergency SAR activities, including many of the following requirements. The IHOG direction for any operational deviation from policy shall also be followed. (IHOG chapter 17)
2. A USFS Helicopter Flight Manager will be notified of each incident involving USFS personnel flying in cooperator/non-USFS procured aircraft.
3. The assigned USFS Helicopter Flight Manager and USFS aircrew members for each SAR mission with FS personnel on board shall use the “mission appropriate” risk assessment tools described in the IHOG chapter 3, Exhibit 3-4 and/or Exhibit J. The completed risk assessment should be reviewed with the Pilot in Charge, IC and all USFS air crew members involved in the flight prior to the mission.
4. Authorization for all flights will be given on a case-by-case basis by the Incident Liaison (responsible employee in charge) in consultation with the Line Officer, Helicopter Flight Manager, and Forest Aviation Officer as necessary. It is recognized that during certain life-threatening emergencies, this cannot always be accomplished before the fact. (IHOG 17; V, A).
5. All Forest Service personnel involved in SAR flight or ground operations shall at a minimum successfully complete the S271 Basic Helicopter Operations course, should attend annual refreshers (RT-271) and shall maintain the appropriate level of Interagency Aviation Training (IAT) certifications commensurate with their role in the operation.
6. USFS participants in cooperator SAR flights shall wear PPE that consists of an approved aviator flight helmet with functional avionics, aviation flight gloves, and a Nomex flight suit or other suitable Nomex flight garment. Waiver of PPE requirements for non-emergency flights under extreme environmental conditions (snow, extreme cold) may only be granted by the Director of Fire and Aviation, Washington Office. (IHOG 9-2; FSM 5716.31).
7. Prior to any flight with USFS personnel on board, the Incident Liaison will inform Redding Incident Command Center (RICC) of the following: Agency providing the aircraft, names of USFS personnel on board, and confirmation that flight following established Siskiyou County SAR procedures.
8. Manifests and load calculations are required and shall be prepared in accordance with the IHOG, Chapter 7. Will follow the use of the Performance Planning Card when utilizing military aircraft or cooperator aircraft with valid agreements in place. (IHOG 17-3 and 7-2 B)

**The following Aviation Operations Procedures will apply to USFS ground operations during SAR incidents with cooperator aircraft**

9. A standard harness type climbing helmet with functional chinstrap, aviation flight gloves, high-visibility safety clothing, and protective eyewear are the minimum required PPE for USFS participation in ground operations during cooperator SAR missions.
10. As time allows, Accident Scene Coordinator should review the Aviation Watch-Out Situations and Helicopter Landing Area Selection briefing cards (from the Incident Pocket Response Guide) prior to aircraft arrival. Mitigate any identified concerns, if possible, and inform the pilot of the results of the assessment.
11. The Accident Scene Coordinator will determine whether a suitable helispot exists nearby and if the patient can be moved to the location. If no nearby helispot exists, the Scene Coordinator will inform the Incident Commander of potential alternatives for evacuating the victim (depending on aircraft, pilot and crew qualifications) For hoist or short haul operations, only S-271 or Long Line/Remote Hook trained personnel will prepare and hook the load.
12. The Pilot-In-Command is responsible for making the decision whether to utilize any unimproved landing or extrication site. The Accident Scene Coordinator should assist in preparing a site to receive aircraft and provide assistance (vertical distance callout, location of tail rotor in relation to obstacles, other aircraft in area, skid location, etc.) to the pilot as needed, which shall not exceed the level of their training or qualifications.

**Annual Aviation Operations review**

13. Prior to the beginning of each climbing season and prior to any Forest Service involvement in SAR flights, the Climbing Rangers, Resource Officer, Duty Officer(s), Law Enforcement Officer, and Forest Aviation Officer shall meet to discuss and review aviation operations protocols.
14. Prior to the beginning of each climbing season, and prior to any Forest Service involvement in SAR flights, affected USFS staff, representatives of the Siskiyou County Sherriff Department, and aircrews from the cooperator agency aircraft should meet to discuss and review aviation operations protocols.

## **Approval Guidelines for Use of Mechanical Equipment for Search and Rescue Within The Mt. Shasta and Castle Crag Wilderness**

At 36 CFR 293.6 (c) the Chief, Forest Service is authorized to prescribe the conditions under which motorized equipment, mechanical transport, aircraft, installations, or structures may be used by officers, employees, agencies, or agents of the Federal, State, and county governments in designated Wilderness in emergencies involving the health and safety of persons, damage to property, or other purposes.

Forest Service Manual (FSM) 2326.1 outlines the conditions under which motorized equipment or mechanized transport mechanisms may be approved by the authorized officer within designated Wilderness. The Forest Supervisor has authority for: *“Emergencies where the situation involves an inescapable urgency and temporary need for speed beyond that available by primitive means. Categories include fire suppression, health and safety, law enforcement (including serious crime or fugitive pursuit), removal of deceased persons, and aircraft accident investigations”*.

- The Redding Incident Command Center (RICC) Floor Supervisor has been delegated the authority by the Forest Supervisor to authorize mechanical equipment use in the wilderness for situations in which an immediate threat to life exists. This includes aircraft and other motorized equipment. The Forest Supervisor retains the authority for approving any other use of motorized equipment to enter the wilderness.
- The USFS or Sherriff Department Incident Commander or the Incident Liason, shall make the request directly to RICC. In urgent/life threatening situations, the Accident Scene Coordinator is not precluded from making the request. RICC will transmit request to the Forest Supervisor as necessary.

**APPROVALS** for the use of motorized equipment/mechanical transport during emergencies will adhere to the following guidelines:

### **1. RESCUE**

#### **Always approve:**

- a. Removal of deceased persons.
- b. Extrication of victims with obvious life-threatening injuries. Examples include, but not limited to, heart attack, stroke, serious bleeding, major fractures (skull, femur), critical hypothermia or altitude illness.
- c. Whenever there is doubt as to whether the injury is life threatening.

### **Usually approve:**

- a.** Injury is not life threatening but delay in rescue transportation by non-motorized/mechanical means may result in additional injury or serious complications from the original injury. Examples include but not limited to, a fractured leg where pain resulting from primitive transport is too great, a serious accident victim may not make it to definitive care before nightfall, or a serious laceration from a source with high potential for infection.
- b.** Injury is not life threatening but is serious and the present or predicted weather would likely cause delays in travel that would make the injury life threatening.
- c.** Where the topography or terrain is so hazardous that it would expose the victim or rescuers to a very high probability of additional injury, or new injury. Factors in this category include the skill and experience of the rescuers, location, time to definitive care, etc.

### **Never approve:**

- a.** When the injury is not life-threatening and the victim can be transported by non-motorized/mechanized means to the nearest logical point of transport. Examples include simple arm fracture, sprained ankle, non-medical exhaustion, etc.

## **2. SEARCH**

This section applies only to those activities which require Forest Supervisor approval:

- Approval is required for airdrops, landing, constructing helispots, and removal of wreckage.
- Flight operations incident to a search with no landing involved does not require authorization.
- Low level flights below 2000 feet above ground level AGL is discouraged by the Federal Aviation Administration over Wilderness.

### **Always approve:**

- a.** There is good reason to believe that the person being searched for has a life threatening injury. *Example:* Person was last seen wandering in a daze without appropriate equipment.
- b.** There is good reason to believe the lost person will be placed in a life-threatening situation as a result of predicted adverse change in weather conditions. *Example:* Person was lightly dressed and poorly equipped and a winter storm is predicted.
- c.** The only available rescuers are not physically or technically capable of accomplishing the search without motorized equipment or mechanical transport.
- d.** When there is an external situation requiring immediate location of a person within the Wilderness. *Example:* an immediate relative is in a critical medical condition.

- e. When there is doubt concerning whether or not the victim is in a life-threatening situation.

**Usually approve:**

- a. A close relative has died and the family has requested that the person be located in order to perform a necessary function within uncontrollable time constraints.

**Never approve:**

- a. There does not appear to be any real indication that the party is in a life-threatening situation.  
*Example:* the person is in good health, dressed for the situation, is reported slightly overdue.
- b. Outside request is made to locate a person for non-critical external reasons.  
*Example:* attend funeral of a friend, make financial decisions, see if the person is OK
- c. The specific requested method will result in negative impacts to Wilderness character and there are alternate methods that accomplish the objectives of the search without the impact to the Wilderness resource.

## ATTACHMENT B

### 2023 List of Representatives

#### Search and Rescue Memorandum of Understanding US Forest Service/Siskiyou County Sheriff Department

As described in sections III and IV of the MOU, the following list of representatives are authorized to request or receive services under this agreement. The list of representatives will be reviewed and updated by the parties to the agreement annually at a minimum by the parties and, or as changes occur.

#### Siskiyou County Sheriff Department

Mr. Jerimiah LaRue, Sheriff – cell: (530) 598-4200 / office: 530-842-8300\*

Mr. Sam Woods, Deputy, Lead SAR Coordinator (530) 598-2948 \*

\* After Hours Dispatch (530) 841-2900

#### USDA Forest Service, Shasta-Trinity National Forest, Shasta McCloud Management Unit

Carolyn Napper, District Ranger, Shasta-McCloud Management Unit (530) 926-9620 \*

Daniel Hewitt, Recreation Staff Officer, (209) 543-4465

Paul Zerr, District Fire Management Officer/Duty Officer (530) 926-9625 / cell: (530) 360-1661\*

Drew Grahm, BC 61, (530)782-0952 / Josiah Obst, BC 71, (530) 859-3551

Lisa Wilson, Law Enforcement Officer (530) 227-8412

#### Climbing Rangers:

Nicklaus Meyers, Mt Shasta Wilderness Program Manager (530) 926-9617 / cell: (775) 223-3445\*

Forrest Coots, Mt. Shasta Fire Patrol, (530) 859-2753

NOTE: Forrest has taken a new job in FIRE, but has nearly two decades of SAR experience on Mt Shasta and can still function as the FS liaison during SAR incidents. His duty station remains in Mt Shasta.

Staff listed below are all first-year rangers. Forrest is valuable assistance in the absence of Nick Meyers, providing oversight for the new rangers.

#### Climbing Rangers:

Samuel Clairmont, climbing ranger (808) 228-8605

Eric Falconer, climbing ranger (303) 917-7359

Colleen Green, climbing ranger (716) 310-0031

Cory Beattie, climbing ranger, (406) 788-9362

\* After Hours Dispatch (530) 226-2400