

***Montana Sheriffs & Peace Officers Association***

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**Search and Rescue Subcommittee**

Quarterly Meeting

**Date:** Tuesday, January 10, 2023

**Time:** 10 am – 12 pm

**In-person:** Fort Harrison, HAFRC, Room 113

**Remote:** Via Microsoft Teams

**MINUTES**

**Agenda**

**Introductions:** *Scott Secor (Chair); Nanette Gilbertson (MSPOA); Jake Ganieany (DES)*

**Attendees:**

Scott Secor, Chair

Nanette Gilbertson, MSPOA

Cory Hansen, Cascade County SAR

Tim Jurgonski, Madison County SO

Ralph Duncunzo, Lewis and Clark County SAR

Landon Koteskey, Cascade County SO

Kevin Wright, Lewis and Clark County SO

Bill Pandis, Lewis and Clark County SO

Skylar Steele, Stillwater County SO

Brad Belke, Butte SAR

Frank Finnegan, Butte SAR

Mark ??, Butte SAR

Jon Trapp, Carbon County SAR and Red Lodge SAR

Jason Jarrett, MSPOA Sheriffs Mutual Aid

Ellie Cosgrove, Missoula County SAR

Cindy Stuper, Missoula County SAR

Bill Cassell, Petroleum County SO

Luke LaLiberty, Elkhorn SAR

Dylan Burg – GIS DES

Stacey Bradley, Financial Officer, DES

Jake Ganieany, Bureau Chief, DES

Charlie Gorman, DES

**Review and approve minutes from previous meeting (10-4-22)**

Motion to approve minutes from the October 4, 2022 SAR subcommittee meeting. Second. Passed unanimous.

**Old Business** (Issues previously discussed which require follow-up)

* 2023 Legislative Session
  + Pension for volunteer SAR members

This is a concept that will take extensive work prior to a legislative session in order to be successful. There will likely be interest but also a lot of questions that will need to be researched and answered prior to bringing a bill forward. If the subcommittee is interested, work should be done in the interim prior to the 2025 session.

* + LC 3200 – Generally revise laws regarding search and rescue, LC 3201 – Generally revise laws regarding search and rescue, LC 3202 – Generally revise laws regarding health/disability insurance for first responders

All three of these bills are simply placeholders and will not be acted upon unless directed by the subcommittee.

* + Working dogs Legislation

There is some interest in moving forward legislation to create a definition of working dog with corresponding benefits for said dogs. Nanette will talk with the legislator who brought it up and offer assistance. The definition would need to be narrowly tailored to working dogs on duty in an official capacity as public servants as well as broad enough to allow for all of the various types of working dogs (military, LE K-9s, SAR, conservation, etc.). Travis Manning in Musselshell County would be a good resource as he is on the board for the LE K-9 association.

**New Business** (Emerging issues which require attention from the SAR Subcommittee)

* Explore the idea of a hosted/facilitated SAR equipment exchange

People are interested in the idea. Suggested a page on the [mtsar.org](https://mtsar.org/) website for the purpose of exchanging, donating, or selling SAR equipment would likely be the most efficient way to share information. Teams are constantly purchasing new equipment and it would be helpful to have an easy mechanism to retire old equipment that is still in good working order to other teams in the state.

The SAR team getting rid of the equipment must ensure they follow the appropriate county/agency/association requirements and procedures prior to listing items on the exchange.

Action Items:

* Prior to the next meeting, draft addendum to SAR Subcommittee Operating Procedures which articulates the purpose, scope, requirements, and procedures of the SAR exchange.
* DES build a Survey 123 for the Equipment Exchange. This will be a fillable form that will allow people to send information regarding their equipment to Nanette and Scott to be placed on the mtsar.org website.
* Appropriate Back-up Documentation for Reimbursement Submissions
  + Reiterated that receipts are required for reimbursement. Mileage forms do not require gas station receipts. If you are requesting reimbursement for anything other than mileage, must provide receipts.
* New Federal mileage reimbursement rate as of January 1, 2023: $0.655.

Use this rate for reimbursement requests submitted after January 1, 2023.

**SAR Financial Update**

Written report provided by Stacey via email prior to the meeting and hard copy at the meeting.

FWP cash balance reverts back to FWP on July 1, 2023 per HB 678 (2021 session). However, on July 1, 2023 there will be fewer restraints on mission reimbursements because the funds will be coming from the voluntary donation on the conservation licenses and not subject to the strict fishing, hunting, trapping requirement.

For the first quarter of the year, SAR has spent about 10% of the available appropriation. Stacey reported there is more authority available, but the equipment reimbursement requests have not been reviewed and approved at this time.

Overall, the appropriation/fund is underutilized at this point.

**Training**

* 2023 Trainings
  + **Lewis and Clark County SAR**
    - **Search Management:** Jan 14-16 (Sat, Sun, and Mon, Monday the 16th being MLK day). 11 seats available.
    - **Lost Person Behavior:**  Jan 28-29 (Sat-Sun). 11 seats available.
  + **Cascade County SAR**
    - **Search Management:** May 5-9 (Fri-Tues) 24 students is the optimal number, but if there's a few more it's not a big deal and they can handle it.
* Share upcoming training opportunities
  + **Cascade County** 
    - Ice Rescue
    - February 11 and 12 (Sat & Sun)
    - **8 seats available**
  + **Gallatin County**
    - Swift Water
    - Spring/Summertime
    - Dates TBD. More information to come.
  + **Madison County**
    - Swift Water
    - Spring/Summer
    - Dates TBD. More information to come.
  + **Carbon County**
    - Swift Water
    - Spring/Summer
    - Date TBD. More information to come.
    - Rope Rescue
    - Date TBD. More information to come.
  + **Petroleum County**
    - SAR Basic
    - Would like to host and will work through the SAR subcommittee
* SAR Expo Invitation

Date has changed to May 5-7, 2023. Visit the website for additional information: <https://www.sarexpo.com/>

**Resource List**

* Updated Lists Provided via Email
  + Most up-to-date with new people and contact information

**Reimbursement Requests**

* **Mission**
  + Judith Basin County SAR

August 4, 2022

Total = $176.25

Reimbursement Purpose = Mileage

*Resources: JBSO (2 deputies), JBSAR (2 members), MT FWP (1 warden), USFS (1 Officer), Hobson Ambulance (3 person crew)*

*Narrative: On August 4th, 2022 approximately 0406hrs JBSO received a call of a ATV accident occupied by 2 individuals 1 with minor injuries at the top of Hay Canyon drainage. The individuals were located at daylight by JBSO deputies, fish and game warden, and forest service law enforcement, JB search and rescue was activated to help walk the injured party out. The injured party was medically cleared by Hobson Ambulance. Mission ended at 1958hrs.*

*Motion to approve the Judith Basin Mission SAR Reimbursement for $176.25 with funding authorized by State DES utilizing the appropriate fund source. Second. Approved unanimous.*

* + Judith Basin County SAR

October 23, 2022

Total = $156.25

Reimbursement Purpose = Mileage

*Resources: JBSAR (3 units/8 members), JBSO (1 deputy), Stanford Ambulance (2 EMTs)*

*Narrative: On October 23rd 2022 approximately 1156hrs, JBSO received a call of an adult male lost while hunting due to a blizzard in the area near Yogo Peak in the Little Belt Mountains. The reporting party was the lost hunter. Search and Rescue was activated, staging at the Dry Wolf Campground. The lost hunter was located by search and rescue approximately 1 mile from the lost hunter’s camp. The hunter was possibly suffering from minor hypothermia, Standford Ambulance was dispatched, the hunter was treated by EMTs and cleared medically. Mission ended 2033hrs.*

*Motion to approve the Judith Basin Mission SAR Reimbursement for $156.25 with funding authorized by State DES utilizing the appropriate fund source. Second. Approved unanimous.*

* Gallatin County SAR

October 21, 2022

Total = $4,690.00

Reimbursement Purpose = Helicopter

*Resources: Big Sky Section Ground 7 Valley Section Ground 9 Heli Team 6 Comms Team 7 SAR Deputies 3 Big Sky Fire Ambulance AMR Ambulance   
Resolution: Patient with spinal injury short hauled to awaiting ambulance and next higher level of care.   
Narrative: On October 21, 2022, at 1:26 P.M., Gallatin County Dispatch received a call that a rock climber had fallen approximately 20 feet and sustained injuries to their ankle and lower back near the base of Blackline in Gallatin Gateway. Gallatin County Sheriff Search and Rescue Big Sky Section, Valley Section, SAR Heli Team, and AMR responded to assist with the call. SAR Big Sky and Valley ground teams deployed on foot to the patient with ropes and a one-wheel litter. When they arrived and assessed the patient the ground teams requested a SAR Heli Team short haul due to the patient’s condition (back injury) and location (technical terrain). The patient was packaged and short hauled to an awaiting AMR ambulance. The patient was then transported to Bozeman Deaconess Hospital for further evaluation and treatment.*

*Motion to approve the Gallatin County Mission SAR Reimbursement for $4,690.00 with funding authorized by State DES utilizing the appropriate fund source. Second. Approved unanimous.*

* DTSAR

October 5, 2022

Total = $230.48

Reimbursement Purpose = Mileage and Boat Fuel

*Resources: 9 DTSAR Members, 2 LCSO Members, 2 DTSAR Trucks, 2 DTSAR Boats   
Resolution: Subject located*

*Narrative: On 10/5/2022 DTSAR was paged out at 22:05 for an overdue boater on the Koocanusa Reservoir. 9 members of DTSAR along with 2 members of the LCSO responded to the reservoir. R1 launched the Ducksworth and searched along the shoreline. R3 was stationed at McGillivary. R2 searched by road and searched campgrounds, the marina and all roads that could be driven. At 2:21, 3 members in the Ducksworth located the missing subject.*

*Motion to approve the DTSAR Mission SAR Reimbursement for $230.48 with funding authorized by State DES utilizing the appropriate fund source. Second. Approved unanimous.*

* Cascade County SAR

November 13, 2022

Total = $127.64

Reimbursement Purpose = Mileage

*Resources: CCSO 4, Dearborn Fire, ALS2, SAR 4, ARGO, Malmstrom HELO   
Resolution: After attempts, the Malmstrom HELO was able to land at the scene and transport patient to Great Falls.  
Narrative: The victim in this case just had surgery, was complaining of severe stomach cramps, and thought he was going to die. They had to page out fire because EMS would not be able to make it due to the snow. It was determined that even fire could not make it to that location as well. Hence, Search and Rescue was called to make this mission possible. Search and rescue attempted to go in with the ARGO but due to mechanical issues it could not make the trip even though it was attempted. Once all SAR units were back to the staging location, Malmstrom was called, and the HELO assisted with the evacuation. According to the call notes, one of the SAR units on snowmobile responded to the location to assist with the evac. The victim was safely flown out and to Great Falls.*

*Motion to approve the Cascade County SAR Mission SAR Reimbursement for $127.64 with funding authorized by State DES utilizing the appropriate fund source. Second. Approved unanimous.*

* **Training**
* Gallatin County SAR

July 18, 2022

Total = $8,668.17

*Training Type: Managing Inland Search*

*Description: The course was put on by Emergency Response International (ERI) and was entitled “Managing the Inland Search Function - Basic”. This course provides the essence of what the first-on-scene IC must initiate, manage and document on Type 5, 4, or 3 incidents. For the most part, this training is non-technical, but provides a building-block foundation for both ongoing management of the operation and technical search planning potentially necessary in coming operational periods. Most searches begin as Type 5, 4, or 3 incidents and usually resolve using the informal search planning tactics and management contained in this course (Reflex Tasks). The Basic course sets the foundation for the application of search planning as detailed in the Advanced Course program. This training explains the principals involved in the analysis of Lost Person Behavior and lays the foundation for Reflex Tasking, statistical analysis and the use of numerical assessments.*

*Training Provided By: Emergency Response International*

*Motion to approve the Gallatin County SAR Training Reimbursement for $8,668.17 with funding authorized by State DES utilizing the appropriate fund source. Second. Approved unanimous.*

* Gallatin County SAR

October 9, 2022

Total = $9,380.00

*Training Type: Helicopter Team Technical Terrain Extraction  
Description: Training Objectives: Reps on Technical Terrain Extraction Tactic. 2 "patients" will be located on steep terrain below a set of anchors on the large berm. 2-Rescuer Teams will be inserted to the anchors above the patient and perform the Technical Terrain Extraction Tactic as per the Job Task Analysis. Members who are not actively involved in the tactic or on-deck, will practice insertion and extraction with the "screamer suit." All team members will get reps on insertion/anchoring/extraction. PPE: All Team members will train with a Team Helmet/Headset, radio, long pants, mission-appropriate footwear, and gloves (lightweight rigging gloves or similar product). Comms: All comms will be on Tan. Training Reminder: Use 5-part radio communications and SOP verbal and hand signals for "Hook" and "Unhook"*

*Training Provided By: Gallatin County SAR and Central Copters*

*Motion to approve the Gallatin County SAR Training Reimbursement for $9,380.00 with funding authorized by State DES utilizing the appropriate fund source. Second. Approved unanimous.*

* Gallatin County SAR

December 4, 2022

Total = $8,710.00

*Training Type: Heli Team (Helicopter Operations)  
Description: Winter Operations training. Performed reps for standard insertion/extraction while flying with skis, patient packaging in winter conditions, and technical extraction evolutions. Team Manager performed qualification checklist with a new team member and insured safe for flight status. Reimbursement request is for 2.6 hours of helicopter flight time.*

*Training Provided By: Gallatin County SAR and Central Copters*

*Motion to approve the Gallatin County SAR Training Reimbursement for $8,710.00 with funding authorized by State DES utilizing the appropriate fund source. Second. Approved unanimous.*

* Stillwater County SAR

September 23, 2022

Total = $9,074.54

*Training Type: Basic Search and Rescue  
Description: ERI/Outdoor Safe provided three days and one night in the field of Basic Search and Rescue skills, which included an overview of search theory/management, the SAR system, legal issues and public expectations, search techniques, rope and line skills, lost person behavior, short term survival, shelter building, fire building, and victim extraction. The course was open to all SAR agencies in Montana free of charge. Members from six SAR teams from across the state attended this training. Lunch was provided for all attendees for days one and two of the training (GSA rate) and POST credit was authorized for anyone who needed it.*

*Training Provided By: Emergency Response International*

*Motion to approve the Stillwater County SAR Training Reimbursement for $9,074.54 with funding authorized by State DES utilizing the appropriate fund source. Second. Approved unanimous.*

* **Equipment**

None

Submit SFY 23 Equipment requests in April/May of 2023. Requests will be evaluated and voted on at the last quarterly meeting of the year, which will take place in June.

**Open Comment**

Landon Koteskey inquired about a Cascade County SAR Reimbursement request and was advised to submit the revised request for the next meeting.

**Next Meetings**

* April 4, 2023 – Helena, MT – Fort Harrison – HAFRC and via Teams
* June 27, 2023 – Helena, MT – Fort Harrison – HAFRC and via Teams