



What is WASSPU?

The Washington State SAR Planning Unit (WASSPU) is volunteer resource, operating under the auspices of the Washington State Emergency Management Division. Our mission is to augment SAR incident management in Washington State with search planning services that can include: detailed situational and terrain analysis, technical mapping, state-of-the-art search planning, and applied modern search theory. In order to provide these services, we rely on private donations and grants for our operating and training expenses. You may donate by going to our website: <http://www.wasspu.org/donate/>

WASSPU Missions

- **Mt. Rainier Stranded Climbers 06-5 / 6-06** - SSPU members responded to the Incident Command Post at Longmire, Rainier National Park to assist the NPS in their rescue efforts to extract four stranded climbers near the summit. We were mentioned by name in the NPS national news release on this high-profile rescue when the Four climbers were successfully rescued.
- **Mt. Rainier Missing Hiker – 06-27-19** – Rainier NPS requested the assistance of WASSPU for a missing man who was hiking on or near the Muir Snowfield. Bad weather came in and the subject failed to return. SSPU members responded to the command post at Longmire to assist with planning for the next operational periods. The subject was located, deceased, in the vicinity of the Nisqually Glacier.
- **Alpentel Missing Hiker 07-09-19** – WASSPU responded at the request of King County Sheriff's Office for a missing hiker. He was last seen on 07-04. His car was located at the Alpentel area on 07-09. Anticipating a large search area, KCSO Detective Christian requested the State SAR Planning Unit immediately. WASSPU Members deployed to the command post in the first operational period and were able to formulate a search plan for the second operational period. This plan utilized data from a brief video

uploaded to the cloud from the missing person (possibly moments before his fall), cell phone forensic information, comparing satellite images to the video, interviewing witnesses and friends of the missing person, talking to climbers and skiers with local knowledge. WASSPU was able to determine the highest probability area to search. Teams were inserted the next morning and located the missing hiker, deceased, most likely resulting from a fall in the area identified as one of the highest probability areas based on analysis the night before.

- **Goodell Creek 05-26-19** – WASSPU was activated to provide a Remote Search Plan to assist the National Park Service in North Cascades National Park searching for a missing 7-year-old girl whose family was camping beside Goodell Creek. She was missing for 24 hours. She was located uninjured under circumstances that matched the what the team determined to be the highest probability scenario.
- **North Cascades National Park 09-15-19** – WASSPU provided planning assistance to the National Park Service in North Cascades National Park for a missing 21-year-old woman who had gotten separated from her backpacking group in the Hidden Meadow area in Chelan County. She had been missing for about 36 hours in cold rainy weather. She was located uninjured early the next day by a canine team in an area designated by WASSPU as one of the top priority search areas.

WASSPU Outreach and SAR Community Involvement

- WASSPU Members presented six SARTopo classes at the Washington State Search and Rescue Conference in June, these sessions included applying search theory to finding human remains and hosting round-table discussions to share best practices on searching for human remains.
- Two WASSPU members, Eric Rosenberg and Dan Merrifield, were presented with 2019 SARVAC SAR Leadership awards at the conference.
- Having encountered the WASSPU for the first time at the Goodell search, WASSPU was invited for a meet and greet with the North Cascades National Park SAR Coordinator and Climbing Ranger Staff. One week later they called WASSPU to come help with the Hidden Meadows search.

WASSPU Field T-Shirts have arrived!



New Additions – Welcome to our newest members, Charlie Gorman and Kate Cummings. Charlie is a volunteer from Kittitas County SAR with a strong background in emergency management where he worked as an Emergency Management Director with the City of Redmond and retired from a law enforcement career holding assignments in investigations, supervision, as a public information officer and managing the emergency operations center. Kate Cummings has been very active for the past 18 years with the Kitsap Unit of the Washington Explorer Search and Rescue where she has vast experience as a team leader, operations and planning leader and a canine handler. Both new members bring a variety of skills and knowledge to our organization.

Recruiting – We are continuing our efforts to recruit new members from regions throughout the State of Washington. If you, or someone you know, is a good team player, has a talent for or aptitude to learn about search theory and planning, please visit <http://www.wasspu.org/membership/> to learn more.