

Missing family found in California woods

by UPI

PARADISE, Calif. -- California rescue officials located a father and his three children missing since Monday in Northern California following a trip to look for a Christmas tree. A California Highway Patrol rescue helicopter pilot located the family Wednesday evening following several days of heavy snow and below freezing temperatures when he saw the word "HELP" spelled in tree branches laid out in the snow, the Los Angeles Times said Thursday. Frederick Dominquez and his three children, Christopher, Lexi and Josh, spent three days in an impromptu field shelter and a road culvert after they got lost in the woods Monday. Frederick Dominquez said he shifted into survival mode in an attempt to keep his family optimistic about the prospects of being rescued. "I didn't want them to really lose hope," he told CNN Wednesday. "Whenever they would freak out, I would just be like, it's all right. We're going to make it through this." The family kept warm by removing their socks and placing them under one another's shirts, they said. The former wife of Dominquez, Lisa Sams, reported the family missing Monday night and more than 80 people scoured the woods in an effort to locate them, CNN said Thursday. The Dominquez family suffered no grave injuries.

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