

Injured skier rescued from Paulina Peak

by Cheryl McDermott

Even though an injured skier's cell phone battery had gone dead, its GPS chip enabled rescuers to target the Bend, Oregon man's location which led to his eventual rescue from the heavily-forested terrain Tuesday afternoon, deputies reported.

Ian Minsker, 28, was able to call 911 about 11:30 a.m. before his phone's battery died, and reported that after being dropped off at the top of Paulina Peak earlier in the morning, he injured his leg and couldn't go any further. He had skied "The Chutes" north and west off the summit, Deschutes County Cpl. Neil Mackey said.

That call set off a rescue operation that included deputies, Deschutes County Search and Rescue (SAR) members, U.S. Forest Service personnel and the La Pine Fire Department. They converged near 10-Mile Sno-Park, and met with several of Minsker's friends who offered their help.

Using the GPS feature of Minsker's dead cell phone, searchers were able to target his location in a steep and heavily-forested area northwest of Paulina Peak. "It initially appeared that because of the terrain and recent heavy snowfall that rescuers would have to ski or snowshoe in to Minsker's location," Mackey said.

The injured man was found by two of his friends about 3:15 p.m., and he was given a snowmobile ride to a nearby trail where he was met by SAR paramedics. Minsker was taken to Paulina Lake Resort where his condition was assessed, Mackey said, then he was transported to the Sno-Park where he was placed in the care of La Pine Fire personnel.

He was taken to St. Charles Medical Center in Bend with unspecified, but non-life threatening injuries, the corporal reported.

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