

Stranded rafters rescued on Deschutes River

by Cheryl McDermott

Three Redmond residents who became stranded on an island in the Deschutes River after they lost their air mattresses when they were swept down the Big Eddy rapids in the Deschutes River were rescued on Sunday afternoon by local search & rescue personnel, firefighters, and good Samaritans who happened to be in the area.

According to Deschutes County Sheriff's Office Lt. Erik Utter, Steven Rust, 26, his 9-year-old daughter Tifa, and girlfriend Andrea Evans, 24, capsized after they were caught in the current as they tried to exit the river before entering the "Big Eddy" rapids about 4 p.m., July 22. All three managed to swim to Lava Island, but were unable to cross to the river bank due to the strong current.

Fortunately some local rafters, all employees of the Inn of the Seventh Mountain, ferried Bend firefighters across the river in their raft to rescue the stranded three and bring them safely ashore. Deschutes County Sheriff's Office search & rescue team members also responded to the scene.

No injuries were reported, Utter said.

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