

Media Release

Yavapai County Sheriff's Office

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“Rescue 1” and its Crew a Critical Link to Locate Missing Teens

On May 25, 2014, around 12 noon, YCSO dispatchers were notified that 2 teens, ages 13 and 15, were canoeing along the Verde River and missed their predestinated pull off point at Beasley Flats Recreation area. After the rescue, deputies learned the pair had continued down the river another mile and when they realized they had gone too far, the canoe was beached. The teens then began hiking away from the river in hopes of finding their family. Instead of backtracking upstream, the pair mistakenly went cross country and followed a dry wash heading north from the Verde River. The teens are from the Tempe, Arizona, area.

YCSO's Rescue 1 helicopter was launched immediately following a call from family members and the helicopter crew was able to locate the abandoned canoe on a shore line. The Rescue 1 pilot landed and dropped off a YCSO Forest Patrol deputy who began tracking efforts to locate the teens. As the air search continued, the Rescue 1 crew eventually spotted the teens around 2:15PM in the Cottonwood wash and coordinated their rescue. The teens were reunited with their anxious family who were waiting on Fossil Creek Road and the Highway 260 junction.

Concerns and lessons - Forest Patrol deputies reported the teens had very little prior experience in river canoeing. Additionally, they took no food, water, or cell phones and did not have any floatation devices on board. Deputies also noted that if the teens had not beached their canoe where they did, the Verde Falls were only a half mile away and with their lack of experience, the results could have been tragic.

As always, rescue professionals recommend to those who get lost or disoriented, remaining stationary will provide rescuers a better opportunity to affect a timely successful rescue. Resist the temptation to “wander” in an attempt to self-rescue which complicates searchers efforts and could present additional risks that would be avoided otherwise.

Finally, the rescue team noted that without the immediate availability of Rescue 1, a ground search would have taken hours just based on the topography alone.

Citizens can contact the Yavapai County Sheriff's Office with information or questions at 928-771-3260 or the YCSO website: www.ycsoaz.gov