

Snowmobilers rescued in Little Belt Mountains

David Murray, Great Falls Tribune Published 5:48 p.m. MT Jan. 29, 2020



Two lost snowmobilers were rescued Wednesday after getting stuck in deep snow in the Little Belt Mountains (Photo: Getty Images/Hemera)

Two snowmobilers spent a cold night in the Little Belt Mountains but were otherwise unharmed after being found in a creek drainage southeast of the Showdown Ski Area Wednesday afternoon.

Meagher County Sheriff Jon Lopp said search and rescue crews were dispatched to the Kings Hill area Tuesday night after Larry and Donna Jenkins of Great Falls had failed to return home from a snowmobiling excursion.

"They had told their daughter where they were going," Lopp said. "When they didn't return they drove up there and found their vehicles, and that's when they called."

Rescuers from the Meagher County Sheriff's Office, the Cascade County Sheriff's Office, Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks and the U.S. Forest Service all converged upon the area.

"We also called Malmstrom Air Force Base and their helicopter was used," said Cascade County Sheriff Jesse Slaughter, noting the cooperation from multiple state and federal agencies to locate the missing snowmobilers.

Lopp said the couple was found in the Harrison Creek area east of U.S. Hwy. 89 on Wednesday afternoon. The couple had walked away from their snowmobile Tuesday evening after it had gotten stuck in deep snow.

"It was just really deep snow and they weren't good enough riders to get out, said Lopp. "They thought there was a trail at the bottom of the gulch ... so they went further down in and then found that there wasn't a trail. So they just stopped and built a fire and spent the night."

Slaughter said the couple was examined for any physical injuries, but managed to escape their ordeal without harm.

"They were okay," he said with a sense of relief. "They were checked out and they ended up being just fine."

"I would like to just thank all the cooperating organizations for that," Slaughter added.. "It was a huge team effort, in the middle of the night, for everyone to come together."

David Murray is Natural Resources/Outdoors reporter for the Great Falls Tribune. To contact him with comments or story ideas; email at dmurray@greatfallstribune.com or call (406) 791-6574. To support his work, [subscribe today and get a special offer \(https://offers.greatfallstribune.com/specialoffer\)](https://offers.greatfallstribune.com/specialoffer).

Read or Share this story: <https://www.greatfallstribune.com/story/news/2020/01/29/snowmobilers-rescued-after-cold-night-little-belt-mountains-montana/4615032002/>