



AAC Publications

Stranded – Exhaustion, Climbing Alone

Canada, Yukon Territory, Kluane National Park and Reserve, Mt. Logan

In the early morning of June 1, Parks Canada was notified that a solo climber was requesting assistance high on Mt. Logan. The climber had summited the mountain and was located at Prospector's Col, at approximately 5,500 meters. The climber was experiencing fatigue, having trouble route-finding, and getting low on food and fuel. Although a helicopter is not able to land safely at this location, a Visitor Safety team was able to drop food and supplies for the climber by air later that day.

On the afternoon of June 2, a father and son climbing team that was at Camp 4, at 5,200 meters, climbed to Prospector's Col and assisted the individual down to Camp 4. That evening, weather conditions allowed for a successful rescue of the climber at Camp 4 using a helicopter sling rescue system deployed by the Visitor Safety team and the on-site climbers.

ANALYSIS

The climbers who assisted the individual in distress were key to the success of this rescue in several ways: 1) a helicopter could not safely land at the climber's location; 2) deploying a rescue team by ground would have required additional time for acclimatization; and 3) the climber required assistance at the site to deploy the sling rescue system. In the absence of aid from these climbers, alternate rescue options would have been employed by the Visitor Safety team, but the result likely would have been an increase in complexity and duration of the operation. This incident highlights the increased risk that is associated with solo climbing. (Source: Kluane National Park and Preserve.)

Images

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