



AAC Publications

Various Rescues — Climber Falls and Rockfall

Washington, Cascade Range, Mt. Stuart

On July 29, a 23-year-old woman was struck by rockfall near the top of the north ridge of Mt. Stuart and took a long fall as a result. She was seriously injured, with a head injury and fractured arm and leg. A Naval air rescue team tried to reach the climber twice, later the same night and then again in the morning, but the combination of altitude, wind, and hot weather limited the helicopter's capability.

Instead, a team from Chelan County Mountain Rescue was flown in by Chelan County helicopters and then ascended to the climber's position. Through the afternoon and evening, the rescuers lowered her about 1,000 feet down the northwest face of the mountain to reach the Stuart Glacier, where additional team members met them. A Navy helicopter was able to evacuate her at about 11:30 p.m. on July 30, more than 24 hours after the accident. She was reported to be in satisfactory condition at the hospital.

On the other side of the mountain, two climbers were rescued after falls in the Cascadian Couloir, in May and July. Both suffered broken legs and required helicopter evacuation.

ANALYSIS

Regarding the late-July incident on Stuart's north ridge, posts at Chelan County Mountain Rescue's Facebook page said, "Yesterday's rescue mission on the NW Face of Mt. Stuart was a model of cooperative task management in the face of great challenges and while confronting immense danger.... Thanks sincerely to Craig Gyselinck [Field Team Leader], Jacob Leonard, Nathan Richmond, Vern Nelson, Jonah Manning, and Jason Schilling for accomplishing one of the most complex, dangerous and difficult rescues ever done on Mt. Stuart." (Source: News reports, Chelan County Mountain Rescue.)

Images



After helicopters could not reach an injured climber near the top of Mt. Stuart, rescuers climbed to her and then lowered her about 1,000 feet down the steep northwest face to the Stuart Glacier, where a helicopter could evacuate her.

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