



AAC Publications

Fatal Fall

Mt. Hood

On Sunday, May 30, a climber (male, 63) fell 500 feet from the Old Chute route on Mt. Hood (11,239 feet). He was descending the route with his adult son. He fell from around the 10,500-foot level—the steepest section of the climb.

Witnesses called 911 and the Clackamas County Sheriff's Office SAR team immediately responded, setting up a command post at Timberline Lodge and requesting assistance from Portland Mountain Rescue (PMR), the Hood River Crag Rats, and American Medical Response's Reach and Treat Team (AMR). A member of PMR and a member of the Crag Rats happened to be recreating on Mt. Hood when they learned of the accident. They immediately started toward the accident scene to assist with rescue efforts.

Around 10:30 a.m., rescuers made visual contact with the fallen climber, who was not moving. They found him deceased. The climber was loaded onto a skiable rescue litter basket, and at 4:20 p.m. they began making their way down the mountain.

ANALYSIS

While climbing mountains is inherently risky, no explanation of the events leading to this accident has been provided. It was an exceptionally busy weekend on Mt. Hood, and Portland Mountain Rescue offered a safety message for those climbing the mountain: "Warm weather at this time of year can create very unstable conditions on this area of Mt. Hood, including falling ice. The addition of many climbers of varying skill levels can add additional hazards. Exercise caution." (Source: Clackamas County Sheriff's Office Public Information Unit.)

Images

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