

Two Scout leaders found near Sooke

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By Tim Collins



Juan de Fuca Search and Rescue manager Kathryn Farr and RCMP Cpl. Joe Holmes were on scene earlier this month when three men were reported missing and later found dead following heavy flooding of the Sooke River. (Kevin Laird - Sooke News Mirror)

The search for two Scout leaders who went missing on Sunday morning has come to a successful conclusion as the two missing leaders have been found. The search for the two leaders, one male and one female in their mid-thirties, began after the pair went missing after a dangerously swollen creek blocked their troop from returning to their van and the pair went to get help.

Cute as a Button!



Three leaders and five scouts had left Sooke on Saturday morning for what was intended to be a wilderness adventure, but inclement weather throughout the day convinced them to cut the outing short on Sunday morning.

But when they tried to return to their van, which they had parked on a logging road near Alligator Creek, they saw that the heavy rains had swollen the creek to dangerous levels. Two of the leaders decided to hike out a different way, while the third leader stayed behind with the young scouts. But after several hours and no sign of rescue, the third leader, a local firefighter, called for help on a fire department radio he'd brought along on the outing. "We managed to find the third leader and the scouts, who had spent a wet Saturday night out in the woods," said Vicki Weber, senior manager with Juan de Fuca search and rescue. "But conditions were just miserable and Alligator Creek was still very high. We couldn't get across, even with our swift water team." SAR decided to leave two of their members with the scouts and try to extract them on Monday morning.

The alternate route out was long and treacherous, she added, so two members hiked in and stayed with the troop for another night. That leader and the five scouts were, in fact, evacuated on Monday morning. The two missing leaders were both very experienced in the outdoors, Weber said. "They are both ex-military and they left with full backpacks loaded with survival gear, so we were thinking all along that they may just have gotten turned around and are just holed up, waiting for help to arrive." That assumption turned out to be correct. An RCMP canine unit had already been out looking for the two missing leaders and, on Monday, a helicopter search also began. This latest disappearance comes a few weeks after three young men were reported missing and later found dead after their pickup truck was swept away in the flooded Sooke River.

READ MORE: Story of fatal misadventure emerging from Sooke River search for missing men (<https://www.vancouverislandfreedaily.com/news/story-of-fatally-tragic-misadventure-emerging-from-sooke-river-search-for-missing-men/>)

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