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Juan de Fuca trail third busiest in B.C. for search-and-rescue calls

The top reasons for initiating a call for help.



Roxanne Egan-Elliott
May 20, 2023 4:30 AM

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Hikers on the Juan de Fuca trail made 13 calls to search and rescue last year, making it the third busiest trail in the province.

The Cape Scott trail took the 10th spot on the B.C. Search and Rescue Association’s list, with five calls.

With warm summer weather coming early this year, the association is highlighting the need to be prepared as hikers hit the trails.

The top three reasons for initiating a call last year were because hikers were lost with no map or navigation device, poor footwear or footing leading to a slip, and being unaware of a trail’s difficulty, said Sandra Riches, executive director of B.C. AdventureSmart, a program aimed at reducing the number and severity of search and rescue calls.

Of 504 hiking-related calls last year, 271 could have been prevented by wearing appropriate hiking boots, learning how to read a map and researching a trail to be mindful of its difficulty, she said.

A video created by the B.C. Search and Rescue Association calls the Juan de Fuca trail an “advanced” 47-kilometre trail that takes about three to five days and is most popular in May to October when the weather and trail conditions are best.

Hikers will “almost certainly” encounter fog, rain and mud year round, but the trail is hit with “particularly severe weather” during winter and shoulder seasons, the video says.

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