FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
Lake Berryessa, Napa County, California

On Tuesday July 29, 2014, at approximately 1500 hours, CHP Helicopter 30 (H-30) received a request from Napa County Sheriff’s Department for assistance with the search and rescue of two lost hikers near Berryessa Peak in rural Napa County. H-30 responded from the Napa County Airport with a crew of three (Pilot Scott Ellison, Flight Officer/Paramedic Ben Schmidt and Flight Officer/Paramedic Allen Romero). The hikers were approximately 7 miles from their vehicle, they had been hiking for 9 hours, and it was 95 degrees out. The hikers were exhausted and without water. The hikers called for assistance utilizing their cell phones. H-30 searched the rural mountainous terrain and located them on a trail below a steep and rugged ridgeline west of Berryessa Peak. H-30 lowered, on the hoist, Officer Schmidt to the hikers for a medical evaluation. After Officer Schmidt evaluated each hiker, they were extracted utilizing the hoist and flown to a landing zone near their vehicle. They were then transferred to the care of awaiting emergency personnel.

Flight officer/paramedic Schmidt stated that it would have taken several hours for emergency personnel to hike in, locate and retrieve the parties. The entire operation took the crew of H-30 approximately twenty minutes to locate, evaluate, and return them to a safe location.

The California Highway Patrol Golden Gate Division Air Operations unit, based at the Napa County Airport, operates four aircraft (two airplanes and two helicopters) which patrol approximately 6,923 square miles that incorporates a residential population of more than 7 million people. The helicopter is routinely staffed with a CHP Officer/Pilot and a CHP Officer/Paramedic. The helicopter is equipped with a rescue hoist that has 165 feet of cable that can lift patients and/or rescuers, with a cumulative weight up to 450 pounds.

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