

CHP Helicopter Rescues Hiker Near Monticello Dam

Monday, November 17, 2014: On November 16, 2014 at 1530 hours, CHP Helicopter 32 (H-32) monitored Cal Fire dispatch broadcast a call of a man stuck on a cliff near Monticello dam on the Southeast corner of Lake Berryessa. H-32 responded A 20 year old hiker had fallen down an extremely steep and precarious cliff. The hiker was stuck 50 feet from the bottom of the cliff and 200 feet from the top of the cliff. A hoist rescue was determined to be the safest means of extricating the hiker from the cliff. CHP Pilot/Officer Dave Power held H-32 in a steady hover above the hiker while Flight Officer Craig Koyl lowered CHP paramedic Ben Schmidt to the hiker. Officer Schmidt quickly assessed the patient and secured him in a lift collar (horse collar). Officer Schmidt and the hiker were hoisted up to H-32 before being flown to a nearby landing zone where the hiker's care was transferred to an awaiting ambulance. The hiker was transported to a nearby trauma center with non-life-threatening injuries.

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 rescue cable that can lift patients and/or rescuers, that can weigh up to 450 pounds, into the helicopter.