



PRESS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Missing Boaters on Lake Sonoma

Sonoma County, Calif. –At approximately 0400 hours CHP Helicopter 30 (H-30) was requested to assist Sonoma County Sheriff’s Department with locating missing boaters on Lake Sonoma in the unincorporated portion of northern Sonoma County. H-30 was advised that a male and a female boater had not returned from their day on the water. Sheriff’s deputies, utilizing their department watercraft, did an extensive search of the lake without success prior to H-30’s arrival. At approximately 0440 hours, H-30 arrived in the area, quickly locating the couples boat utilizing GPS coordinates the sheriff’s department received from the missing parties mobile phone and night vision goggles. H-30 conducted a search of the area near the boat, eventually locating a 32-year-old female and a 37-year-old male, both from Santa Rosa. CHP Officer/Pilot Pete Gavitte landed the aircraft in a field approximately 300 feet from the missing parties. CHP Officer/Paramedic Matt Gutierrez hiked to the party’s location and assessed both for injuries. Other than being cold and tired, neither party required medical assistance and were secured into the aircraft. H-30 transported both parties to the public boat launch area where they met with Sonoma County Sheriff’s Deputies who would assist in making plans for their boat retrieval.

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 the 9 Bay Area Counties, approximately 6,923 square miles that is home to 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. The CHP would like to remind boaters to stay safe when on the water, and prepare for the unexpected emergency. Along with required Personal Flotation Devices (PFD’s), having light sources and warm clothes greatly decreases chances for illness and injury and assists the rescuers in locating you in a timely fashion.

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