



# Colorado Search and Rescue Board

P.O. Box 631452  
Highlands Ranch, CO 80163

## Newsletter May 2010

July CSRB Meeting  
July 17, 2010 @ 6:30 PM  
Western State College, Gunnison, CO



### **2010 SARCON CONFERENCE** **Thursday, July 15 thru Sunday, July 18, 2010** **WESTERN STATE COLLEGE** **Gunnison, Colorado**

Classes being offered by Track:

**Basic SAR Track:** Introduction to Tracking, Understanding SAR Operations, Building Search, Medical Rescue & Evacuation, Drug Hazards in the Wild, K9 101 for Ground Pounders, Navigation - GPS, Maps & Compass, Social Media for SAR, Team Development

**Specialty SAR:** Avalanche "Avy Savvy" in Summer, Radio Direction Finders, Cave Rescue in Colorado, SARTECH II Testing, SARTECH II Practicals, WINCASIE Familiarization, Cell Phones, PLBs & SAR Technologies

**Air:** NTSB & FAA Crash Investigation, CAP-Air Operations, Introduction to National Guard, Helicopter Safety, Introduction to CAP

**K9:** Drug Hazards in the Wild, K9 Medic - Basic & Advanced, Alzheimers Characteristics for K9, Intro Scent Theory, Human Remains Detection, Reading Pet Food Labels, K9 Learning Theory, Forensics for K9, Search Dog Apps for Garmin Astro Units, E-Collars, Meth & Other Scent Abnormalities, Search Strategies for Wilderness Dog Handler, PheromonalComms for K9 & Mounted, Ethics for K9 Team Members, Building Search for K9

Website: [www.sarcon.org](http://www.sarcon.org)

Colorado Search and Rescue Board  
Meeting Minutes

03 March 2010 - Florissant Fire Department,  
Florissant, CO

Meeting Opened at 1210 hours

**Introductions**

Thank you for hosting the meeting.

**Resources**

Barry Mitchell went over summary of stae calls, Have had 29 calls since the first of the year. Diane Bigley in the pipeline to become a state coordinator in the fall. The State Emergency Manager meeting was well attended with folks from a lot of entities. CSRB was represented.

**Standards**

ASTM has not met, so no report. The CO Resource Mobilization Working Group is working to establish their own standards as there has been no input from FEMA.

**Legislation Updates**

HB 1095 is waiting for the Governor's signature. The new form for the State Parks use application will be put on our website for easier access.

**Training Report**

Leonard was not present but sent an update via e-mail.

Brenda Vietch reported her and Kim went to Wyoming to take their NASAR testing. Fremont in March for SARTECH. El Paso is using the FUNSAR for the new member class. SARCON in July for SARTECH. Hope to be able to do workshops by the end of the year. Need to make others evaluators. Scores from class must be 90% or above to become an instructor and 70% or up to pass the class. Consists of a written exam and 5 practicals. There is no standardized training

in the state. We discussed how NASAR/SARTECH works. SARTECH does meet ASTM standards. FEMA intends to adopt ASTM.

SARCON is July 16-18. We held a planning meeting prior to the CSRB meeting. Check in with start at 1400 on the 15<sup>th</sup>.

[www.sarcon.org](http://www.sarcon.org)

Plans Section Chief - instructor from Alaska wanted \$5500.00 Too costly. Offered \$250 per student and waiting on an answer. We are looking for an instructor. We want one here but it must be reasonable to teams/students.

**PLB in Colorado**

Discussed the recent PLB incident in the state. Went over the handouts, AFRCC gives you the composite info. Had a lengthy discussion on AFRCC policies on PLBs.

**Organizational Reports**

None

**SAR Fund**

Bruce Fosdick - Letters for next year are out to the Sheriff's. The form is not with it. You will need to go to the website and get it.

Only 1 application per county. It is DUE in Grand Junction on April 1. The state fiscal year runs 7/1 - 6/30. Bruce explained the grant cycles and guidelines. The wording on the grant request or reimbursement request is critical if it is to be funded or not.

**Communications**

Barry Mitchell - VTAC 18 is no longer authorized for use. Handed out info.

800DTR designed for Law Enforcement.

Great coverage. Keep your VHF radios as is works where 800 does not. Switch to NB.

Group formed at state to coordinate the

switch for FERN, NLEC, etc. Motion: CSRB set as policy that we will set our switchover as January 2012. All agreed. Discussed costs involved with FCC.

### **Help Wanted!!**

We still need a newsletter editor.

### **Other Business**

Charging for SAR issue still popping up. Sportsman's Channel and the Weather Channel.

### **Mission Reports/Lessons Learned**

Fremont - great support for mission for missing woman in Penrose. Her body was found in the Arkansas on the 27<sup>th</sup>. Combo of buoyancy, river release, etc. finally exposed her. Discussed there is availability of underwater cameras through Larimar Dive Rescue.

Garfield - very quiet

Archuleta - just same ones

RMR- DF PLB. A cross country skier was injured and made a radio call via HAM radio that went through Teller that called for help through Boulder. Had firefighters in bunker gear with only 1 avy beacon among them. Md-air plane collision. FD handled during the early hours. SAR later to look for body remains, HAZMAT issues with NTSB. 2x1 mile debris area. Still searching for parts. No ELT found.

Berthoud - Alpine members caught in an avalanche. Nobody buried or injured.

Meeting adjourned at 1430 hours.

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**01 May 2010 - Rocky Mountain Rescue Group, Boulder, CO**

Meeting Opened at 1202 hours

### **Introductions**

Thank you for hosting the meeting.

### **Resources**

Barry Mitchell went over summary of state calls. PLB calls in Douglas and El Paso counties. Turned out to be in a dorm room on UCCS. Went over that, if the hit is not GPS derived, it could be up to 20km off.

### **Standards**

ASTM will have its meeting in Phoenix in June. The state resource system has a glitch that does not allow input of individual resources. Boulder now has a new Type III IMT for the state. The group credentialed 40 resources. The trouble is verifying the documentation provided by the individuals. Tim holden - State 1<sup>st</sup> Responder card? How does it fit into the credentialing? COFRAC system.

### **Legislation Updates**

No Updates

### **Training Report**

MLSO - the group is going over the test questions to make corrections. They are sticking with old material. LaPlata class in September. Denver area in October?

SARTECH - at SARCON. The Veitch;s are holding one today.

SARCON - A handout of the schedule and classes was provided, which is available on the website. There is an additional fee of \$15 for each K9.

Plans Section Chief - Trying to negotiate another cost as the last offer was too much. The one instructor has moved from AK to Las Vegas, so is closer. We are trying to get instructors in CO, so that classes can be more affordable. NASAR feels that classes need to get out there. Currently there are only 3 instructors in the nation. Only 3-4 classes taught last year nationwide.

Costillo County wants Barry to come down to train instructors for their new SAR group and go thru the gear they bought with grant

money. Patient packaging, etc. Conejos County wants help. As well. Barry is getting e-mails from them but is not getting replies and is not getting to talk to them. Hinsdale County has a new GSAR director and wants help training new SAR team in GSAR. They are in touch with WSC. Tim Holden offered to help Barry out.

### **PLB in Colorado**

Discussed during the State Coordinator's report. The experience has been frustrating, but we are learning.

### **Organizational Reports**

MRA - Recerts - Douglas last week, Grand this weekend, Routt in two weeks, Alpine 1<sup>st</sup> weekend in June.

NASAR - Howard Paul's Director term is coming up but he will run again. The NASAR Valor award is being presented this year to 5 teams in Colorado for an exemplary nighttime mission in the Crestones 7/27-29/09. Howard will be sending out a Press Release from NASAR. SARDOC - 6 searches. 1 new dog in Larimer. 1 less in Breckenridge as the dog passed away from cancer. Only 6 years old, Currently have 15-16 teams.

### **SAR Fund**

Bruce Fosdick - Meeting 5/19 in Frisco. 42 teams submitted grants totaling \$646k. Only about \$295k available. Warrants being cut the end of June with disbursement mid-August.

### **Communications**

Barry Mitchell - working with Jack Cobb to get more 800mhz radios for the coordinators, Mobile with a beam antenna. Discussed the CSRB decision to switch to narrowband on January 2012. Douglas and Boulder counties have radio

caches. About 40 VHF radios and portable repeaters.

Barry has now got a trailer set up with comms and for conference.

### **Board Vacancy**

Pat Paulson is in Italy for the next 3 years, so has vacated his CSRB seat. It is up to be filled.

### **Help Wanted!!**

We still need a newsletter editor. We will get a newsletter out after NASAR conference.

### **Other Business**

The current edition of the County Sheriff's (CSOC) magazine has a lot of info in it about SAR. Barry discussed a great software called Depiction that can be used for mission management. It handles a lot of GIS, map overlays, etc. [www.depiction.com](http://www.depiction.com)

### **Mission Reports/Lessons Learned**

SARDOC - searched for the missing 12 y/o girl.

Teller - involved in the search for the missing guy from Westminster. Family influence to get media involved a strong factor.

Douglas - Stuck motorist on Rampart Range Road. The mile marker given was very odd as the gates were closed and no tracks in the snow,. Dispatch CAD system error?

CAP - 4ELT, 3 missions this month.

**Next meeting location to be at SARCON in Gunnison (WSC) July 17<sup>th</sup>, 1830 hours.**

Meeting adjourned at 1419 hours.

Respectfully submitted

Dan Remsburg

CSRB Secretary

## Nomination for the 2010 Valor Award of the National Association for Search and Rescue

**Nominees:** Colorado's Alpine Rescue Team, Custer County Search and Rescue Team, Douglas County Search and Rescue Team, El Paso County Search and Rescue Team and Rocky Mountain Rescue Group and their members that performed a remarkable nighttime rescue July 27-28, 2009.

**Nominator:** Howard M. Paul, NASAR Board of Directors; Past President, Colorado SAR Board; member, Alpine Rescue Team\*. hmpaul@ecentral.com (303) 829-5678. \*Please note that I was not involved in the rescue for which this nomination is made. I am proud to make this nomination to recognize the superb work performed by my Colorado colleagues this July night, in terrain known by mountaineers and rescuers alike as risky at best.

**Executive Summary:** July 27-28, 2009, 26 members of Alpine Rescue Team, Custer County Search and Rescue Team, Douglas County Search and Rescue Team, El Paso County Search and Rescue Team and Rocky Mountain Rescue Group, all in Colorado, conducted a high-altitude rescue that was above and beyond the call of duty, exemplifying the selfless, perhaps risky commitment to others embodied in the NASAR motto, "That Others May Live." The rescue took place entirely at night on the traverse between two of Colorado's most dangerous 14,000-foot peaks, Crestone Peak and Crestone Needle, in a gully notorious for rockfall and surrounded by 70° rock faces of 1,500 feet. Rescuers had to climb nearly 4,500 vertical feet, ascending more than 3,000 vertical feet to the summit, then perform a technical lowering for 1,700 vertical feet and then climb back up 1,500 vertical feet to a pass before descending another 1,500 feet. Ten successive lowering stations were required to lower the injured climber from 14,000 feet to a helicopter at 12,300 feet — all before severe summer

thunderstorms developed over the peaks. Command and coordination was by radio from 15 miles away.

### Background on the Crestone Peak - Crestone Needle traverse

Stabbing the sky in Colorado's rugged Sangre de Cristo Mountains, the jagged summits of Crestone Peak (14,298') and Crestone Needle (14,201') were the state's last 14,000-foot summits to ever be climbed. Once thought to be unclimbable, these



*The famed Crestone traverse follows the ridge between the Peak and Needle. The dotted yellow line shows the rescue evacuation route. (Photography courtesy of Wojtek Rychlik, www.pikespeakphoto.com.)*

peaks are considered the state's most difficult "fourteener" summits to reach. Between these two spectacular peaks — the 7<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> highest in the state — is a famed traverse; described in Gerry Roach's Colorado's Fourteeners climbing guide, "The traverse of the Crestones is one of Colorado's four great fourteener traverses". This climb is listed as a Class 4 \*Classic\*. The most difficult part of the traverse is the 500 feet on the Needle's north side. Knobby conglomerate rock delights climbers, but occasionally it lets loose rocks that will damage anything in its path.

The morning of July 27, 2009, two climbers were attempting the Peak-to-Needle traverse when a hold broke. One climber fell, fracturing his leg. Now stuck at nearly 14,000 feet, the climber needed rescue.

## Nomination for the 2010 Valor Award of the National Association for Search and Rescue

### The rescue

The Custer County Sheriff's Department received the emergency call from the two climbers late that morning. Knowing the extreme difficulty of the location, Custer County Search and Rescue Team requested additional technical rescuers from the Colorado State SAR Coordinator. 26 rescue mountaineers from five teams — Alpine Rescue Team, Douglas County Search and Rescue Team, El Paso Search and Rescue Team and Rocky Mountain Rescue Group — responded to assist. The Air Force Rescue Coordination Center was contacted and high altitude helicopter support was requested, in the hopes the rescue could be completed before nightfall.

Rescuers from as far as 175 miles away responded to the command post in the small town of Westcliffe. The Incident Commander and Operations Chief put together a nighttime rescue plan in which rescuers would attempt to reach the injured party by climbing to the summit of Crestone Needle (14,201') and then rappel off onto the traverse to the injured party.

Additional rescuers would also hike in from the southeast side and climb from below via Cottonwood Lake. Flight For Life – Colorado's high-altitude AS350 B3 helicopter was called to shuttle rescuers to the mountain, to avoid the long, slow drive on a 4x4 road. Before dark only one team of rescuers could be flown from Westcliffe to the mountain. All the other rescuers drove the 1-2 hours up the 4x4 road to the trailhead. While rescuers had begun their climb (around 21:00 hours) of Crestone Needle, the US Air Force Rescue agreed to attempt a nighttime hoist operation. Two HH-60G Pave Hawks and a C-130 airborne refueling plane were dispatched from Kirtland AFB in Albuquerque, NM, home of the USAF's Pararescue & Combat Rescue Officer School. As reported by USAF Lt. Col. Thomas D. Humphries, who was the flight lead for this mission:

*"All I needed was a site larger than my 53'- 8" rotor diameter to be able to hover in-ground-effect that was nearby the objective and I would have shot my approach to that site and let my PJs recover the objective from there. However, what we both found when we assessed the objective's location were 70-degree rock faces towering 1500-2500 feet from the lower terrain, requiring an out-of-ground effect hover capability to stop in open airspace to hoist the objective.*

*While my wingman was assessing the site, we looked at all we carried to see if we could download enough to get light enough and determined that site required us to lighten our aircraft 1100# below the zero fuel weight of the aircraft to be able to hover out-of-ground-effect at 14,000' MSL.*

*Neither of us, when we assessed the site separately, found anything even close to the objective that would have afforded a rescue of the objective any faster than the climbing teams."*

At 14,500 feet in the dark at 01:00, the Air Force had to give up their rescue attempt, leaving the 26 rescuers on the mountain to complete the mission. A predicted threat of significant daytime thunderstorms meant the rescue be done that night.

In addition to personal gear for a high alpine peak, rescuers carried 1,600 feet of rope, anchor slings and hardware, a litter and medical supplies up a very complex and extremely rugged



*The Crestones as seen from the west. The rescue evacuation route is marked in yellow. (Photography courtesy of Wojtek Rychlik, [www.pikespeakphoto.com](http://www.pikespeakphoto.com).)*

## Nomination for the 2010 Valor Award of the National Association for Search and Rescue

mountaineering route. The first team of rescuers reached the injured climber around 01:30 that night and began what would become a 1,700-foot evacuation of the injured climber.



Eighteen of the rescuers climbed to the summit of Crestone Needle that night to reach the injured man. Meanwhile eight other rescuers crossed the 12,900' Broken Hand Pass and circled 1-1/4 mile around to the mountain's west side where they met the litter and injured subject about half way down a gully called Asteroid Alley — so named because of lots and lots of rock fall.

Working through the night entirely by headlamp rescuers rigged 10 successive lowering stations through vertical rock cliffs, steep scree fields and icy snow. After five strenuous hours, the injured climber was carried to a helispot at about 12,300 feet.

A Flight For Life helicopter was able to land and transport the climber to a hospital in Pueblo, Colorado, 56 miles away. Rescuers then faced a hazardous 1000-foot climb back up over a pass and 1,900 feet again down the mountain, and all arrived back at the trailhead before the start of the forecasted afternoon thunderstorms.



*Medevac helicopter to transport subject to a Pueblo hospital.*

### **An unusual mission**

This mission was unusual from typical high-mountain missions in several ways:

- To avoid dangerous, forecasted afternoon thunderstorms this entire mission was completely performed during the night on one of the most notorious and severe 14,000' peaks in Colorado.
- Rescuers from five SAR teams had to work together in severe technical terrain with very difficult route finding, which was all done by headlamp.

## Nomination for the 2010 Valor Award of the National Association for Search and Rescue

- Radio communication and rescue coordination was spread across two sides of a large mountain; the command post was 15 miles northeast of the accident site, ground access was from the southeast and the lowering to the helicopter was on the southwest flank.
- The technical evacuation involved creative and improvised anchors requiring expertise far above the norm.
- Rescuers' efforts were physically demanding, requiring rescuers to climb over 4000 vertical feet. Rescuers ascended more than 3000 vertical feet to the summit, performed a technical lowering for 1700 vertical feet, and then climbed back up 1000 vertical feet to a pass before descending another 1900 vertical feet to the trailhead.

### Agencies Involved

Custer County Search and Rescue Team	<a href="http://www.custersar.org">www.custersar.org</a>
Alpine Rescue Team	<a href="http://www.alpinerescueteam.org">www.alpinerescueteam.org</a>
Douglas County Search and Rescue Team	<a href="http://www.dcsarco.org">www.dcsarco.org</a>
El Paso County Search and Rescue Team	<a href="http://www.epcsar.org">www.epcsar.org</a>
Rocky Mountain Rescue Group	<a href="http://www.rockymountainrescue.org">www.rockymountainrescue.org</a>
Colorado State SAR Coordinator (CSRB)	<a href="http://www.coloradosarboard.org">www.coloradosarboard.org</a>
Custer County Sheriff's Department	<a href="http://www.custercountygov.com/sheriff.htm">www.custercountygov.com/sheriff.htm</a>
Air Force Rescue Coordination Center, USAF, Kirtland Air Force Base, 512 RQS and 505 SOS	<a href="http://www.1af.acc.af.mil/units/afrcc">www.1af.acc.af.mil/units/afrcc</a>

☆☆

### NATIONAL SEARCH AND RESCUE WEEK

On Friday, May 14, the U.S. Senate unanimously passed Resolution 526 which honors the men and women who perform Search and Rescue throughout the United States. The Resolution specifically acknowledges the role that professionals and volunteers provide to our country, and sets aside the week of May 16 to May 22, 2010 as National Search and Rescue week. Also, it encourages the people of the United States to observe and hold ceremonies and activities that promote awareness and appreciation of the role SAR personnel provide for their communities.

### SENATE RESOLUTION

Designating May 16 through May 22, 2010, as "National Search and Rescue Week".  
Whereas the National Association for Search and Rescue and local search and rescue units across the United States have designated May 16 through May 22, 2010, as "National Search and Rescue Week";  
Whereas the Senate recognizes the importance of search and rescue services that are provided by both salaried and volunteer citizens through county sheriff offices and military entities;  
Whereas throughout the history of the United States, search and rescue personnel have served the people of this Nation by helping to save the lives of fellow citizens who are lost or injured:  
Whereas search and rescue personnel continually offer educational services that provide individuals with the survival knowledge necessary to live safely in diverse environments, from mountains to deserts and across both the urban and remote areas of this Nation;  
Whereas search and rescue personnel train continually in order to maintain mission readiness and to be able to address complex search and rescue situations with both knowledge and skill;  
Whereas search and rescue personnel are instrumental during national emergencies or natural disasters, as they are willing and able to respond and remain on missions for many weeks;  
Whereas search and rescue personnel are required to be focused and dedicated in order to carry out missions that involve personal sacrifice of time, finance, and property, and place their own lives in danger;  
Whereas in the United States, more than 500 individuals have sacrificed their lives during search and rescue missions or training; and  
Whereas search and rescue personnel shall always be recognized as essential to protecting the lives of the citizens of this Nation: Now, therefore, be it

*Resolved*, That the Senate –

- (1) designates May 16 through May 22, 2010, as "National Search and Rescue Week"; and
- (2) encourages the people of the United States to observe this week with appropriate ceremonies and activities that promote awareness and appreciation of the role that search and rescue personnel perform in their communities "so that others may live".





# **Personal Locator Beacons**

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## **Information for Colorado County Sheriffs**

***You may receive a notification  
of a PLB alert in your county!***

### ***What is a Personal Locator Beacon?***

The PLB is a hand-held, satellite-communicating, emergency location device. They are similar to "ELTs" carried on aircraft and "EPIRBs" on boats. Their use became legal in the entire United States in July, 2003.

When activated, a PLB sends a data burst to passing satellites on 406 MHz; these are the same satellites that receive the ELTs from crashed aircraft. The PLB simultaneously sends an emergency signal on 121.5 MHz for direction finding (DF). The data transmitted to the satellites includes a 15 digit unit registration number. Once picked up by the satellite system, the system generates the latitude and longitude of the source accurate to about 3 miles. Most new generation PLBs have a GPS receiver built-in, and will also transmit a GPS based location accurate to about 500'. All positions are reported in WGS 84 degrees, minutes, tenths of a minute to one decimal.

### ***PLB Owner information***

The owner **should** register the unit with the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) when purchased. However, **many PLBs are unregistered**. The registration information includes the owner's name, address, phone number and backup phone number. This information is stored in a database, and is retrieved when the PLB is activated, but only if the owner registered the unit.

### ***Who gets the transmitted data?***

The satellite stores the information until it is in range

of a ground receiving station, which then relays the information to the NOAA. They process the satellite data and transmit the results, along with the owner information, to the Air Force Rescue Coordination Center (AFRCC). The AFRCC sends the information to a point of contact in the state in which the PLB signal is located.

In Colorado, the POC is the Colorado Search and Rescue Board's on-duty **State SAR Coordinator**. The Coordinator will determine, by latitude and longitude, in which county the PLB alert originated and then contact the county sheriff's office. The Coordinator will not be able to tell you the nature of the emergency, only the PLB's location and (**if the PLB is registered**) the owner's name, address, phone number and backup phone number.

### ***If a PLB goes off in my jurisdiction what should I do?***

A PLB activated in your area of responsibility usually means that a person is in distress and needs immediate assistance. 9-1-1 Centers need to treat this like any other SAR notification. Your first notification of the event will probably be a phone call from the State SAR Coordinator who will relay all available information. Make sure dispatchers understand the nature of the phone call. **This is an emergency!** Treat this as all other SAR reports and notify the appropriate county SAR resources.

***For further information about PLBs, contact the Colorado SAR Board. You may go to [www.coloradoSARboard.org](http://www.coloradoSARboard.org) for current officers' and telephone numbers.***

**24 hour SAR Resource Assistance  
1 (800) 593-CSR (593-2772)  
PO Box 631452  
Highlands Ranch CO 80163  
E-Mail: [csrb@coloradosarboard.org](mailto:csrb@coloradosarboard.org)**



P.O. Box 631452  
Highlands Ranch, CO 80163

**Upcoming Calendar of Event**

SARCON	7/15 thru 17/2010	Western State College, Gunnison, CO
CSRB Meeting	7/16/10	Western State College, Gunnison, CO
CSRB Meeting	9/04/10	TBD
CSRB Meeting	11/06/10	TBD