

Lost Church Group Rescued From Deadly Mountain Fate

Fifteen members of a church group who became lost during a hike in the mountains outside Los Angeles over the weekend were spotted from the air on Monday and were being rescued by helicopter, a county sheriff's spokesman said.

The hikers, who range in age from 14 to 36 years old, became lost on Sunday while hiking to a waterfall in the San Gabriel Mountains near Pasadena, Los Angeles County Sheriff's spokesman Johnnie Jones said.

Some two dozen sheriff's deputies searched overnight, but were unable to find the church troop in the darkness, despite coming across family members who had received text messages from them reading: "Help."

Jones said the hikers were glimpsed in the forest at about 9:30 on Monday morning by a sheriff's helicopter crew and did not appear to have suffered any major injuries.

"They were all found together by our air unit and one of our airships lowered a medic down to them," Jones said. "The medic is assessing their medical needs taking them out one at a time to a safe location."

Reporting by Dan Whitcomb; editing by G. Crosse and Andre Greno.