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Area woman rescued from falls

Matt Stensland
STEAMBOAT TODAY

STEAMBOAT SPRINGS

It took eight and a half hours Wednesday evening to rescue a 20-year-old woman from King Solomon Falls in North Routt County.

North Routt Fire Protection District firefighters and Routt County Search and Rescue members were called to the falls at about 5:45 p.m. after the woman got hurt on a scree field. She had a bad laceration to the inside of her thigh.

The falls are in a remote location that is not well publicized as a tourist destination.

"It's real neat, but if you're not prepared, you shouldn't be going back there," North Routt Chief

Mike Swinsick said.

The trails are not maintained, and it can be a somewhat dangerous hike.

"For me, walking in and out of there it's pretty sketchy," Search and Rescue member Kristia Check-Hill said.

Rescues from the falls typically take hours with the complex ropes systems that are used.

About 20 people were involved in Wednesday night's rescue.

North Routt firefighters reached the woman first. While her injuries were not life-threatening, they decided it was best that the woman not hike out.

Swinsick said a large rock came down and hit the woman above the knee.

"There were just tons of rocks

and boulders," Swinsick said. "Real sharp ones."

Ropes were set up to lower the woman down from above the creek, and another system was used to haul her. Ropes were also set up for rescuers to navigate the side hill.

A pulley system was used to bring her up the final steep slope.

The woman was then taken to Yampa Valley Medical Center.

"We had a lot of help from North Routt Fire," Check-Hill said.

Rescuers got back to the rescue barn in Steamboat Springs at 3:10 a.m. Thursday.

To reach Matt Stensland, call 970-871-4247, email mstensland@SteamboatToday.com or follow him on Twitter @SBTStensland

Take time to explore Yampa Valley

One of the things I really enjoy about living in the Yampa Valley is seeing all the ranching and agriculture that is at the core of what makes Steamboat Springs such a great community. Watching the fields get colorful, then green, seeing the hay grow and then cut and baled. Every morning I pass cattle, pigs, horses, chickens and sheep on my way into work.

At Yampatika's Environmental Learning Center at Legacy Ranch, we have similar experiences on a smaller scale. There are pigs and goats in the machine shed through the 4-H Town Kids programs, which enable children who live in town to participate in the program by utilizing our space for raising their animals.

The 100-plus acres of hay field is now about four feet high. We even had a herd of 30 elk on the property that included five calves earlier this spring.

The most popular activities in the summer include floating down the river, a long bike ride and daylong hikes. All activities that take quite a bit of time to finish and are best appreciated when not rushed.

community agriculture alliance

Yampatika's summer programs are the same way. Our wildflower and medicinal herb walks and geology hikes take five to six hours to complete. Even our shorter programs, the mineral springs tour and watershed walks are more than an hour long.

What makes all of these activities in the Yampa Valley special is the time it takes. Raising animals, waiting for hay to be ready for harvest is not something that can be rushed. Exploring a hiking trail, learning about wildflowers or area geological features cannot be done quickly or without a bit of thoughtfulness.

This summer, take the time to appreciate what makes the Yampa Valley special. From my perspective, it's both our ranching and agricultural heritage and the nature and the environment that surrounds us that make Steamboat Springs

truly special.

The value of what we have is not in how good it looks through the lens of a phone or how fast we can post about it on social media. The real value comes from what we see with our own eyes, hear with our ears and smell and taste, and touch and feel.

Go on a hike and smell the wildflowers; listen to the wind in the trees. Try to see how many birds you can hear. In the upcoming weeks, we have several programs to stimulate your senses.

On Monday, July 10 is our second watershed walk. On Thursday, July 13 is our last bird walk of the summer, and on July 15 is our last medicinal herb walk of the summer. All of these programs are free or at no cost but do require you to register. Lastly, we have a naturalist at Fish Creek Falls from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. every Thursday, Friday and Saturday for the rest of the summer.

For more information about these programs, visit yampatika.org.

Joe Haines is executive director of Yampatika.



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