



Pincher Creek Search and Rescue Society
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September 30, 2013

Grant Selection Committee

Office of the Fire Commissioner

Please find enclosed Pincher Creek Search and Rescue Society's (PCSAR) grant application under the 2013/2014 Ground Search and Rescue Program. Also attached is a copy of PCSAR's certificate of incorporation and letters of support from a neighbouring SAR groups.

As requested in the grant guidelines, below we provide a substantiation of the rationale for the courses required.

Background

PCSAR is a volunteer search and rescue group with an average of 55 members. PCSAR has responded to over 200 incidents in its 16 year history. It serves the southwest corner of Alberta, but has responded in mutual aid as far away as Red Deer. Its core response area includes large ranching and farming, small towns, First Nations territory, and heavily used mountainous recreational areas with off-road travel routes into British Columbia and a national park.

Partnerships

PCSAR works closely with nearby organizations, such as Lethbridge Area Search and Rescue, Canadian Search Dog Association (Lethbridge chapter), Crowsnest Pass Search and Rescue, and Waterton Lakes National Park. Neighbouring SAR groups frequently participate in PCSAR hosted training. All provincially funded courses are advertised

across Alberta. We often get participants from far afield, even the other end of the province – such as Peace River SAR (990km, this year) or Fort McMurray SAR (950km, 2012). PCSAR also works closely with groups in British Columbia (Sparwood, Fernie).

PCSAR partners with the local fire department (Pincher Creek Emergency Services) and emergency management organization (Pincher Creek Community Emergency Management Agency). PCSAR is regularly called upon to help in major emergencies and disasters.

Together, Shell Canada and PCSAR has developed a novel industry-leading protocol and supporting training program and exercises to use SAR workers on H₂S release incidents.

Priorities

To aid the committee in its selection, we have marked the courses we are applying for, with their priority preference as evaluated by PCSAR. Funding for lower numbered courses are seen as more critical by PCSAR.

5-day Search Manager course

(priority #1)

PCSAR is experiencing generational change as our core group of existing search managers experience attrition. In order to be able to maintain our capabilities and avoid overload and burnout, we dearly need to have a new generation of dedicated search managers trained. Our candidates have a strong foundation in search and rescue, but their work and family commitments make it very difficult to attend search manager training far away. PCSAR is seeking this course as a priority for our group and our region.

Rope Rescue

(priority #2)

PCSAR's rope rescue team supports rescues in mountainous terrain and steep slope. It assists the local fire department in incidents such as vehicles going off bridge decks into rivers or down embankments.

PCSAR has trained with local industry around their 50m high wind turbines. A needs analysis is available online at <http://tinyurl.com/bfjr63s>

PCSAR currently trains to British Columbia's PEP SAR rope rescue syllabus. This course will allow ten SAR workers to work towards NFPA 1006 standards. As always we will make course positions available to neighbouring groups. Our planned instructors are certified 1006 instructors/evaluators but also very familiar with the teaching of rope rescue to SAR groups.

If funded, we anticipate running this course over 2 weekends (40 hours) in the Pincher Creek area.

Snowmobile course

(priority #3)

Many of the incidents that we respond to involve lost snowmobilers high in the mountains. PCSAR maintains a highly skilled team of rescue snowmobilers. The instructor we've identified teaches a Canada Safety Council certification course to a high standard. This course will allow our members to remain certified and bring on new members.

Man-tracking

(priority #4)

Man-tracking is a highly useful skill in classic areas of search and rescue. We hope through this course to enhance our core competencies in tracking. Our identified instructor is recognized as the best in the province.

Search and Rescue Basics

(priority #5)

PCSAR regularly runs a Search and Rescue Basics course. Students often come from Lethbridge SAR and the Lethbridge chapter of the Canadian Search Dog Association. Instructors are shared between the

groups. Another strong participant is the Blood First Nations Reserve which is trying to form a SAR organization.

Training materials and lessons plans are continually being developed and are shared with other SAR groups at <http://tinyurl.com/ajwuzvy>

Thank you for considering our application. If there is any additional information we can provide you with, please do not hesitate to contact me at the address below.

Sincerely,

Brett Wuth

Chair, Training Committee

Pincher Creek Search and Rescue

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