

Four Men Rescued from Sharatin

Tuesday, 09 December 2008

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Erik Wander/KMXT

It took a helicopter flight to the lower elevations of Sheratin Mountain and a hike after that, but early this morning, a rescue party of Kodiak Island Search and Rescue members, coordinated by the Alaska State Troopers, rescued four technicians that had been stranded on the 2800-foot peak ten miles west of Kodiak City. The rescuers arrived with warm clothing and shelter and hiked down the mountain to safety.

The four men, technicians constructing the first tower in an island-wide network of high-speed microwave communication relays, included Kodiak Kenai Cable Company Chief Operating Officer Brian Kincaid and three contractors with Belarde Custom Concrete Company of Kodiak. The men were dropped off with a week of supplies in good weather Sunday to work on the tower. Sunday night, high winds reportedly blew away one tent and some of the supplies.

Steve Wielebski, president of the all-volunteer Kodiak Island Search and Rescue group, who helped coordinate the rescue effort with Alaska State Troopers, described the rescue operation.

Wielebski said the KISAR gets called into action when the state troopers and the Coast Guard are unable to facilitate a rescue on their own, which was the case Monday due to volatile weather conditions.

Wielebski said all four technicians are safe and in good health, despite the fatigue of the ordeal.