



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

May 5, 2023
23-13

CONTACT: James Reed

OFFICE: 615.313.0662
james.a.reed72.mil@army.mil

Tennessee National Guard rescues hunter in Cherokee National Forest

KNOXVILLE, Tenn. – A medical flight crew from the Tennessee Army National Guard performed an emergency air evacuation mission for a hunter in Tennessee’s Cherokee National Forest, May 4.

At approximately 1 p.m., the Tennessee Military Department and Tennessee Emergency Management Agency were notified of a person with severe leg injuries needing rescue from the Cherokee National Forest. They were in a rugged and remote area of the park near Boiling Springs.

TEMA approved the mission and Tennessee National Guardsmen, assigned to the 1-230th Assault Helicopter Battalion, in Knoxville, prepared a UH-60 Blackhawk helicopter and launched to rescue the injured person. The aircrew left shortly after 1:30 p.m. local time and arrived at the rescue site 20 minutes later.

The Tennessee Army National Guard flight crew consisted of two pilots, Capt. Brandon Rodriguez and Chief Warrant Officer 3 Daniel Backus, crew chief Sgt. Nicholas Kannard, and two flight paramedics, Sgt. 1st Class Nolan Ogle and Sgt. 1st Class Tracy Banta.

Once the crew arrived at the rescue site, they located an area to safely lower Banta, the flight medic. The crew chief, Kannard, lowered Banta to the ground where he did a medical assessment of the patient and prepared him to be hoisted into the aircraft. After a few short minutes, the patient and Banta were hoisted into the Blackhawk helicopter hovering above where additional medical treatment was provided. The rescue took just 13 minutes.

Once everyone was safely on board, the aircraft then flew to the University of Tennessee Medical Center in Knoxville where the aircraft landed, and medical personnel received the patient. The entire rescue mission took less than an hour and a half.

- (30) -



A Tennessee Army National Guard Blackhawk helicopter locates a distressed hunter in the Cherokee National Forest at approximately 2 p.m., May 4. (Submitted photo)



A Tennessee Army National Guard Blackhawk helicopter crew chief, Sgt. Nicholas Kannard, prepares to lower the fight medic, Sgt. 1st Class Tracy Banta, by hoist to begin rescuing an injured hunter in the Cherokee National Forest at approximately 2 p.m., May 4. (Submitted photo)

All Tennessee Army and Air National Guard press releases can be found at
<https://www.tn.gov/military/news.html>

###