



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Tennessee National Guard aircrew rescues hiker

KNOXVILLE, Tenn. – A Tennessee Army National Guard medical flight crew responded to an emergency air evacuation mission for a hiker with a suspected broken leg in the Great Smoky Mountain National Park area, Oct. 14.

At approximately 4:20 p.m., the Tennessee Military Department and Tennessee Emergency Management Agency were notified of a hiker needing evacuation along the Alum Cave Trail, south of Gatlinburg, requiring immediate medical care.

A UH-60 Blackhawk helicopter from the Tennessee National Guard's Detachment 1, Company C, 1-171st Aviation Regiment, based in Knoxville, assembled in less than 40 minutes, and launched to the incident site at approximately 5:00 p.m.

The flight crew consisted of Chief Warrant Officer 3 Trailson Moore, Pilot in Command; 1st Lt. Gavin Huffman, Pilot; Staff Sgt. Donald Sweet, Crew Chief; Col. Robert Ross, Flight Surgeon; Sgt. 1st Class Tracy Banta, Flight Paramedic; and Staff Sgt. Jared Ennis, Flight Paramedic.

At 5:22 p.m., the aircraft arrived at the hiker's location on Alum Cave Trail. Banta and Ennis were then lowered to the ground by hoist, where they performed a medical assessment on the injured hiker. Once complete, the hiker was medically stabilized, and preparations made to be hoisted into the awaiting aircraft. The hiker was then hoisted into the hovering helicopter followed by Banta and Ennis.

Once onboard, the flight crew continued medical aid while enroute to the University of Tennessee Medical Center in Knoxville. The hiker was safely delivered to the hospital after a 12-minute flight.

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Staff Sgt. Donald Sweet, the aircraft crew chief, operates the aircraft rescue hoist while Sgt. 1st Class Tracy Banta, the aircraft flight paramedic, is lowered to an injured hiker along the Alum Cave Trail at the Great Smoky Mountain National Park area, Oct. 14. (Photo from the Tennessee National Guard)



A Tennessee Army National Guard UH-60 Blackhawk helicopter prepares to lower paramedics by hoist to an injured hiker along the Alum Cave Trail at the Great Smoky Mountain National Park area, Oct. 14. (Photo from the Tennessee National Guard)



Col. Robert Ross, a flight surgeon for the Tennessee National Guard, helps offload the patient from a UH-60 Blackhawk helicopter at the University of Tennessee Medical Center helicopter pad in Knoxville, Oct. 14. (Photo from the Tennessee National Guard)

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