

2025
Annual Report
Bergtrage

2025 SMR Annual Report

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Seattle Mountain Rescue Leadership

Officers

President
Doug McCall

Vice President
Brent Bishop

Treasurer
Raquel Lackey

Secretary
Catharine Killien

Board Members

Sara DeRosier
Emily Prewett
Rebecca Leong

Gordy Smith
Deb McNally
Dr. Ben Stoner-Duncan

General Doug Pierson
Solomon Krevans
Jason Meng

Your Donations At Work in 2025

Seattle Mountain Rescue is an all-volunteer organization of seasoned alpinists that give their time to achieve the vision that, **“Everyone comes home from the backcountry.”** SMR Members do this through training and mission response and outdoor safety education.

We cannot do this without **you** and your generous support of SMR. This year, your donations have provided:

- Resilience training for critical stress and mental health
- Professional avalanche rescue training
- Fully funded the Command Vehicle replacement capital campaign
- Funded medical training
- Replaced aging equipment
- Ensured members have personal rigging equipment
- Provided all members with protective uniforms
- Engaging outreach and education materials
- Drove operational agility to integrate emerging technologies, such as e-mountain bikes, to enhance backcountry rescue effectiveness



Seattle Mountain Rescue is registered as a 501 (c)(3) under **“Mountain Rescue Council”** with **EIN 91-6049880**.

President's Message

As we climb into 2026, I want to begin with gratitude for everyone who supported Seattle Mountain Rescue (SMR) in 2025 and throughout our history. Your generosity through individual gifts, foundations, grants, corporate and small business support, donor-advised funds, qualified charitable distributions, and gifts of appreciated assets such as stock enables us to provide year-round backcountry rescue and education for our community.



A strong alpine team is based on partnerships, collaboration, and a shared vision. Your belief, support and trust in our mission to “bring everyone home from the backcountry” drives us forward. This mission provides backcountry travelers with a peace of mind that if injured, SMR will work tirelessly to bring them home. This mission also supports the economic foundation of our community allowing for visitors to recreate in the backcountry knowing that there is an organization of skilled individuals ready to drop what they are doing to come to their aid.

To further enable our mission, SMR members spend countless hours training in a variety of disciplines from basic to advanced medical care, technical rigging, technical snow and avalanche rescue, Search techniques to expanding Unmanned Aerial Systems (UAS a.k.a Drones) to our newest discipline e-mountain bikes. In 2025, SMR successfully completed Mountain Rescue Association reaccreditation in Search and Tracking.

SMR members also actively work to provide outdoor education and outreach with the intent to prevent a rescue before it happens. In 2025, SMR participated in over 18 education and outreach events providing prevention and lifesaving lessons if one finds themselves in an emergency.

As we look forward to 2026, I am thrilled to announce that the team has officially adopted the e-mountain bike program as a recognized capability of Seattle Mountain Rescue. This addition marks a significant step forward in expanding our operational effectiveness in both urban and backcountry environments. The integration of e-mountain bikes will allow our rescuers to reach those in need faster and more efficiently, especially in challenging terrain where traditional methods may take more time.

In addition, we are collaborating with our Austrian counterparts in alpine rescue. Together, we are conducting tests on new rope materials and improved patient packaging systems. These efforts are focused on enhancing the safety, reliability, and comfort of rescue operations, enabling us to deliver an even higher level of service to individuals requiring assistance in the mountains.

Finally, Seattle Mountain Rescue remains dedicated to continuous innovation. Through thoughtful evaluation and adoption of new technologies and strategic partnerships, we will work to elevate backcountry rescue operations and provide the strongest outcomes for the people we serve.

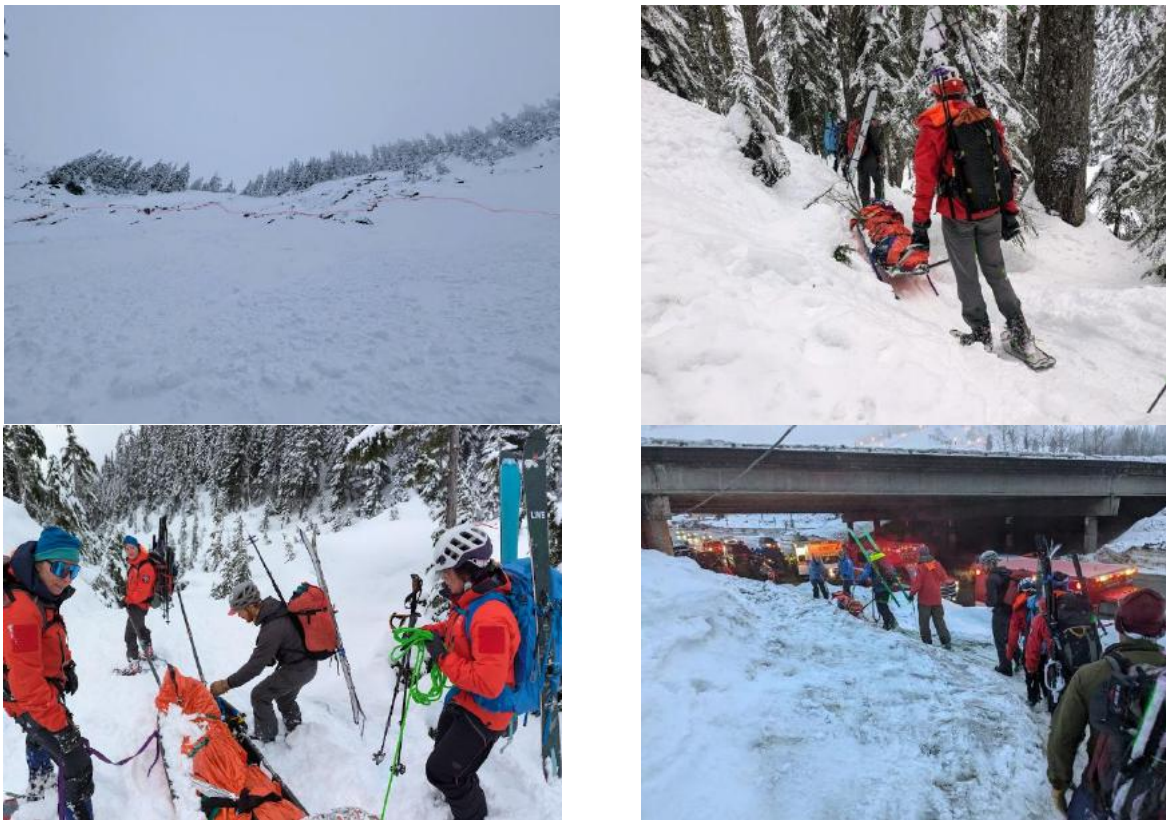
A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Doug".

Doug McCall, President/Chair

Notable Missions

Kendal Peak Avalanche

SMR Responded to a potential mass casualty incident for four people caught in an avalanche near Kendal Peak. Two of the four were actually caught in the avalanche and carried down the slope. One of the members of the party was swept into a tree sustaining injuries requiring evacuation. The party began self-rescue efforts and were met by SMR rescuers who provided medical care and active warming. SMR then brought the subject down the mountain to the trail head where they met Snoqualmie Pass Fire for transport to a local hospital.



The avalanche, The Pack-out and Reaching the Trailhead

Guye Peak

SMR responded to Guye Peak at Snoqualmie Pass for a climber who fell while ascending the west face of the peak. The solo climber slipped on steep snow and fell several hundred feet sustaining several injuries. SMR members who were already recreating at the Pass responded rapidly to reach and stabilize the patient while a helicopter was activated to airlift the patient to Harborview Medical Center.



SMR Members and Bellevue Medic 3 prepare for KCSO Helicopter

Granite Mountain

SMR responded to Granite Mountain for a hiker who had slid on snow into a group of trees where they sustained injuries. An SMR member was recreating on Granite Mountain nearby when the call came in and was quickly able to reach the subject to stabilize them. Responding SMR members raced up the mountain to provide additional equipment for active warming and stabilization. At the same time, the US Navy SAR helicopter from Whidbey Island was dispatched to the scene to airlift the subject to Harborview Medical Center.



Rescuers on the slope of Granite Mtn with NAS Whidbey Island SAR Helicopter

Mailbox Peak

Mailbox Peak continues to be a popular hike for many in the area. While it offers spectacular views of both the Central Cascades and Mt. Rainier, the trail is steep and difficult at times. During the course of four days in 2025, SMR responded to 5 separate missions for a variety of sustained injuries. Further analysis by SMR's Rescue Chair noted that two of the five missions occurred in almost the exact same location on the old trail and that two other missions were consequently close to each other on the new trail.



Teams work to bring an injured subject down the trail

Missions By The Numbers

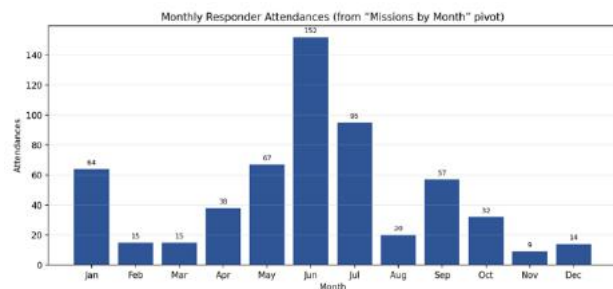
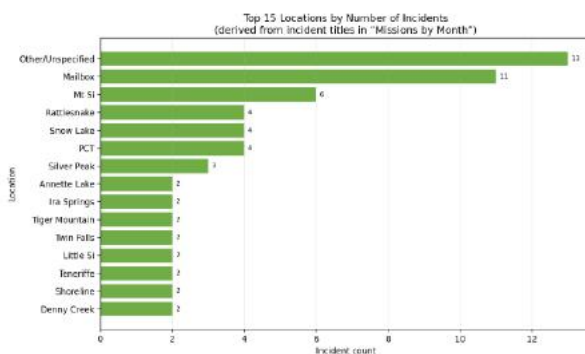
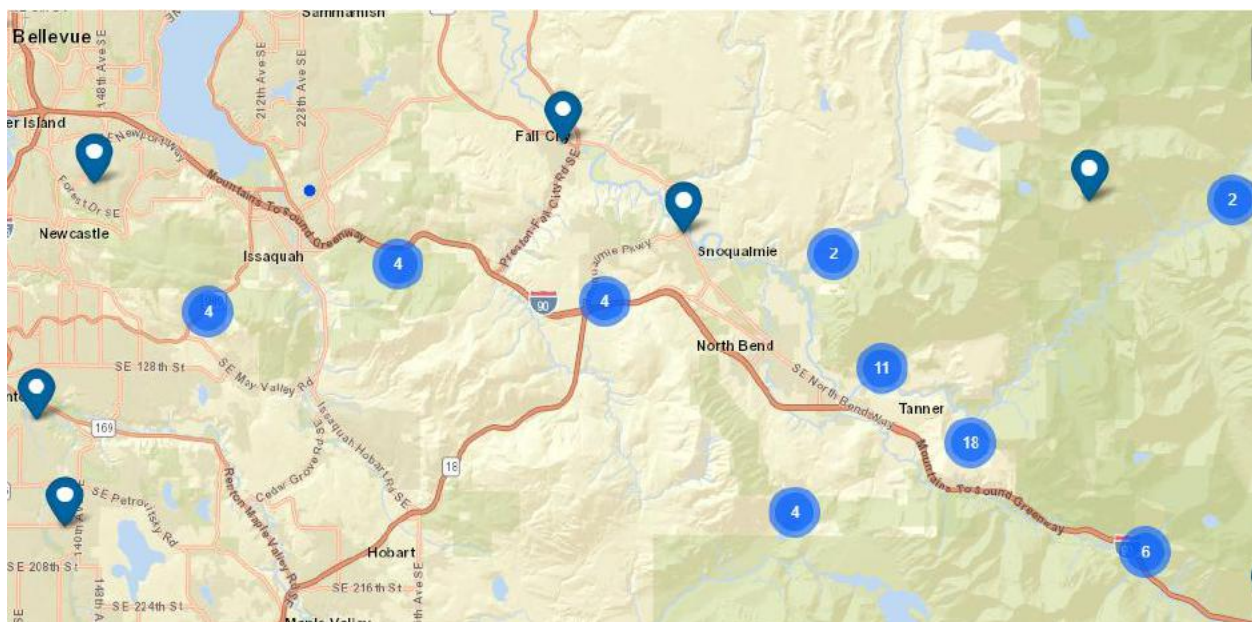
2025 Mission Count

83

2025 brought fewer missions than 2024. We attribute the decline of missions to SMR's Outreach and Education. While this is truly speculation, we would like to believe that our education efforts are showing a reduction in missions.

Mission counts by month show a very pronounced ramp-up into late spring/summer, peaking in early summer. May through July held the highest number of missions for the team. January 2025 was the 4th busiest month for SMR in 2025.

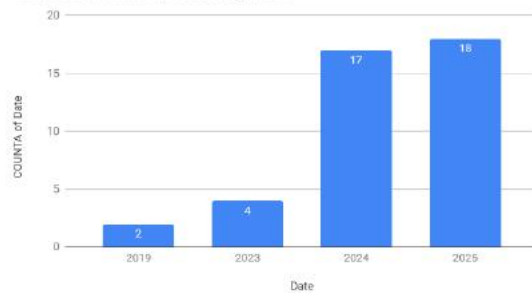
Locations appear multiple times across incidents, including Mailbox Peak, Rattlesnake, Denny Creek, Snow Lake, Tiger Mountain, Little Si, Silver Peak, and Granite Mountain.



Education and Outreach

One of SMR’s strategic pillars is Excellence in Community. Over the last two years, SMR has significantly stepped up our community engagements. In 2025, SMR education events reached a variety of different populations from mountaineering clubs and organizations, high school outdoor programs, city and community leaders, rotary clubs (Bellevue & Duvall) and corporate education events including Weyerhaeuser, Perkins Coie, ExtraHop Networks and Microsoft.

Outreach Tracking: Count by Year



Farah Jadran (King5), Raquel and Ruffles Lackey and Brent Bishop on King5 Morning



Where the Rope Ends – Volition Brewery

Below are some of the organizations and events we engaged with over the summer:

- | | |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Washington Trails Association • BOEALPS Safety Talk • Volition Brewery Leadership Team • Old Stove Brewery • North Bend Downtown Foundation • ProSki 5 Point Film Festival • ExtraHop Networks | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National Night Out • Dicks-A-Thon • Mt. Si Days • The Bush School • Issaquah Salmon Days • University Prep (UPrep) School • Weyerhaeuser |
|--|--|



If you would like SMR to provide an education opportunity for your organization, please contact development@seattlemountainrescue.org

Special Programs

Drone Program

SMR's Drone (Unmanned Aerial System – UAS) program made national news in 2025 for capturing a rescue at the summit of Mt. Si. A hiker had become cliffed out on the rocks near the summit. The SMR drone team launched the drone to assist in locating the subject on the rocks. Clearing the South and East faces of the summit, the Drone team captured the moments when SMR member David Dunphy made contact with the subject, secured him to a rope system and lowered him to safety.



SMR Member David Dunphy assisting a hiker stuck on Mt. Si

The Drone video was picked up by both local television stations as well as national outlets including DroneTV, and Pilot Institute for utilizing the drone to assist in locating the subject and for recording the daring rescue.



SMR members belaying the subject back to the trail

Drones continue to be an invaluable tool for SMR and we were able to upgrade our drone two thermal drones with the latest DJI Matrice 4. SMR also has two DJI Mini drones which can be put in a backpack and flown from the field to help accomplish the mission.

E-Bike Program

In 2025, Seattle Mountain Rescue launched an official pilot program to evaluate the effectiveness of e-mountain bikes in Search and Rescue (SAR) response. The primary goals were to determine if e-mountain bikes could improve operational efficiency and expand our rescue capabilities compared to traditional foot travel.

After defining key use cases—such as hasty team deployment, urban search, and gear hauling—along with test criteria and a small pilot team, the E-Bike group spent the year gathering data. A major component of the pilot involved reconning hiking trails throughout King County to assess their compatibility with e-mountain bikes. This work produced a clear list of trails suitable for e-bike use and, just as importantly, a list of trails where e-bikes should not be deployed. The team also fielded e-mountain bikes on several missions, generating invaluable insights that informed both the emerging training program and operational parameters for King County Sheriff’s Office (KCSO). After significant effort, the pilot confirmed that e-mountain bikes can provide meaningful value in SAR response when used on the right trails and in the right mission profiles.

The pilot also resulted in several important partnerships that strengthened SMR’s capabilities. We secured permission from major land managers, including the Forest Service, DNR, and Regional Parks—to use e-mountain bikes during mission response. The team also built strategic relationships with local bike shops for gear and service support. Of special note is our partnership with The Line Bike Experience in North Bend, whose team generously donated three e-mountain bikes to the unit and offered reduced-cost gear, maintenance and repairs. Support from partners like these—who share our commitment to serving the outdoor community—has been essential to making the e-mountain bike program possible.

We look forward to officially bringing this new capability to mission response in 2026.



e-Mtn Bike Team Night Training Ride



SMR Drone photo of e-Mtn Bike Training

Resilience Program

Seattle Mountain Rescue’s Resilience Program focuses on volunteer wellbeing throughout the entire mission cycle—before, during, and after every response. The program emphasizes early intervention for stress through training, peer check-ins, and curated crisis resources. By helping volunteers recognize stress early, emotionally debrief, and build resilience, the program ensures that our members remain healthy, supported, and ready to serve on future missions.



A special member of this program is **Ruffles**, SMR’s nationally certified Crisis Response K9.

Ruffles is specially trained to detect changes in human stress—particularly elevated adrenaline—and to provide calm, grounding comfort. Her role extends to supporting our volunteers, rescued subjects, their families, and fellow rescuers who may be affected by difficult incidents.

Seattle Mountain Rescue is currently the only mountain rescue team in the country with a certified Crisis Response K9 embedded as a member of the team.

Ruffles joined SMR in April 2021 as a puppy and quickly became a beloved part of the organization. If you haven’t met her, you are missing out on pure joy. With her enthusiastic full-body wag and gentle presence, she has an incredible ability to make people smile—no matter how challenging the day or the circumstances surrounding a mission may be. Providing that moment of connection and relief is exactly what she is trained to do, and she approaches the job with dedication and enthusiasm.

Like all of our volunteers, Ruffles is committed to the mission of Seattle Mountain Rescue and to the wellbeing of her teammates.

Looking ahead, SMR plans to expand the Resilience Program by training additional volunteers in resilience and peer-support practices. We will also continue strengthening our external training partnerships to ensure we are providing the best possible support and outcomes for both our volunteers and the communities we serve.

Certifications, Accreditation and Awards

American Avalanche Association (A3)

In 2025 SMR initiated the process for being certified by the American Avalanche Association (A3). In February 2026, **SMR was officially recognized as a qualified Avalanche Rescue Curriculum & Course Provider!**

A3 recognized provides meet strict requirements for instructor qualifications and operational safety standards, enduring courses are delivered professionally and responsibly. This distinction reflects SMR's commitment to high quality training and being able to safely conduct effective responses to winter backcountry emergencies.



Candid – Platinum Transparency 2026 Certification

Excellence in Non-profit Operations is one of SMR's strategic pillars. In 2025 SMR began the process of being evaluated by [Candid](#), an independent organization that reviews and evaluates non-profits.

The **Platinum Seal of Transparency from Candid for 2026** signifies that an organization has achieved the highest level of transparency in sharing information about its mission, leadership, programs, strategy, and financials. This seal is awarded to nonprofits that meet rigorous standards of transparency and accountability, ensuring that donors and funders can trust the information provided. The Platinum Seal is a testament to the organization's commitment to openness, integrity, and responsible stewardship of the resources entrusted to it. It is a recognition that every dollar is handled with care and invested in services that impact lives, reinforcing trust and confidence in the organization's charitable work.

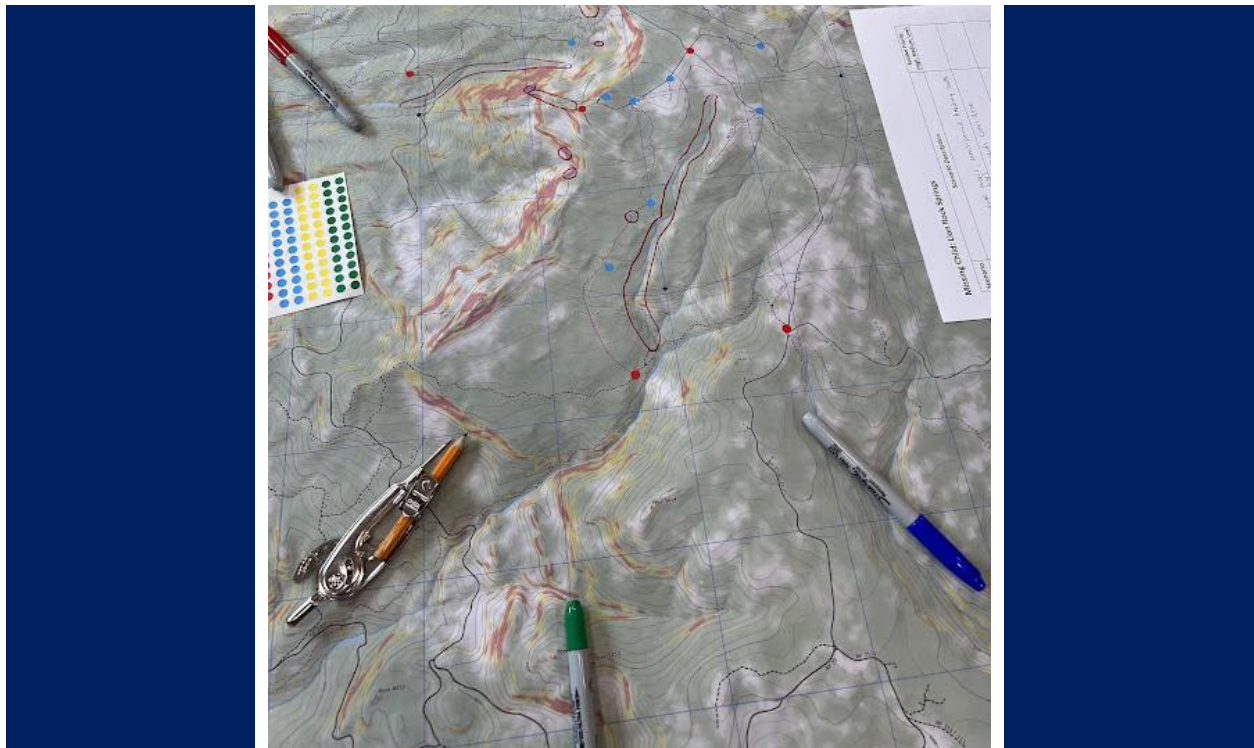


Mountain Rescue Association (MRA) Search and Tracking Accreditation

Seattle Mountain Rescue is a founding member of the Mountain Rescue Association (MRA). The MRA is an international organization of over 100 mountain rescue teams across North America. The MRA oversees the accreditation of teams in Technical Rope Rescue, Snow and Avalanche Rescue and Search and Tracking.

In September 2025, the MRA teams in Washington met to evaluate the search planning and execution based on specific criteria outlined by the MRA and the Washington teams.

SMR successfully met each of the criteria and passed the accreditation evaluation.



King County Sheriff SAR Volunteer of the Year Award 2025

Each year the King County Sheriff's Office recognizes SAR volunteers who have contributed significantly to SAR operations. In 2025, SMR member Doug Caley was bestowed this honor by King County Sheriff Patti Cole-Tindall and Special Operations Sargent Jason Stanley.

Doug Caley has been a long-time member of SMR and has become the regular face as the SMR Base Operations Leader as well as Field Rescue Leader.

Last year, Doug responded to over half of all of the missions that SMR was called out. This means that Doug responded to at least one mission a week.

We thank Doug and his family for their commitment to SMR and our Community.



Austrian Mountain Rescue Partnership



Tirol
Bergrettung

SMR continued our partnership with Bergrettung Tirol in 2025 meeting in Washington DC for the viewing of “[The Volunteers](#)” documentary at the Austrian Embassy in Washington D.C.

The Volunteers documentary film produced by Mark Weiner and David Ritsher documents the surprising connection between the two mountain rescue organizations on the opposite sides of the world. The Austrian Embassy auditorium was filled to capacity to view the documentary.

Special thanks to Mark and David for the vision and drive to make this film. Your efforts have connected our teams that has started a shared passion for mountain rescue. Our teams have been sharing best practices, equipment recommendation and technical learning from the vast array of rescues encountered in both Washington State and the Tirol Region of Austria.



Austrian Ambassador Dr. Petra Schneebauer, Mark Weiner, David Ritsher with SMR and Austrian Mountain Rescue members



Drew Fletcher, Markus Isser, Doug McCall, Sarah Stephan, Jared Carlson and Valentine Schiessendorper

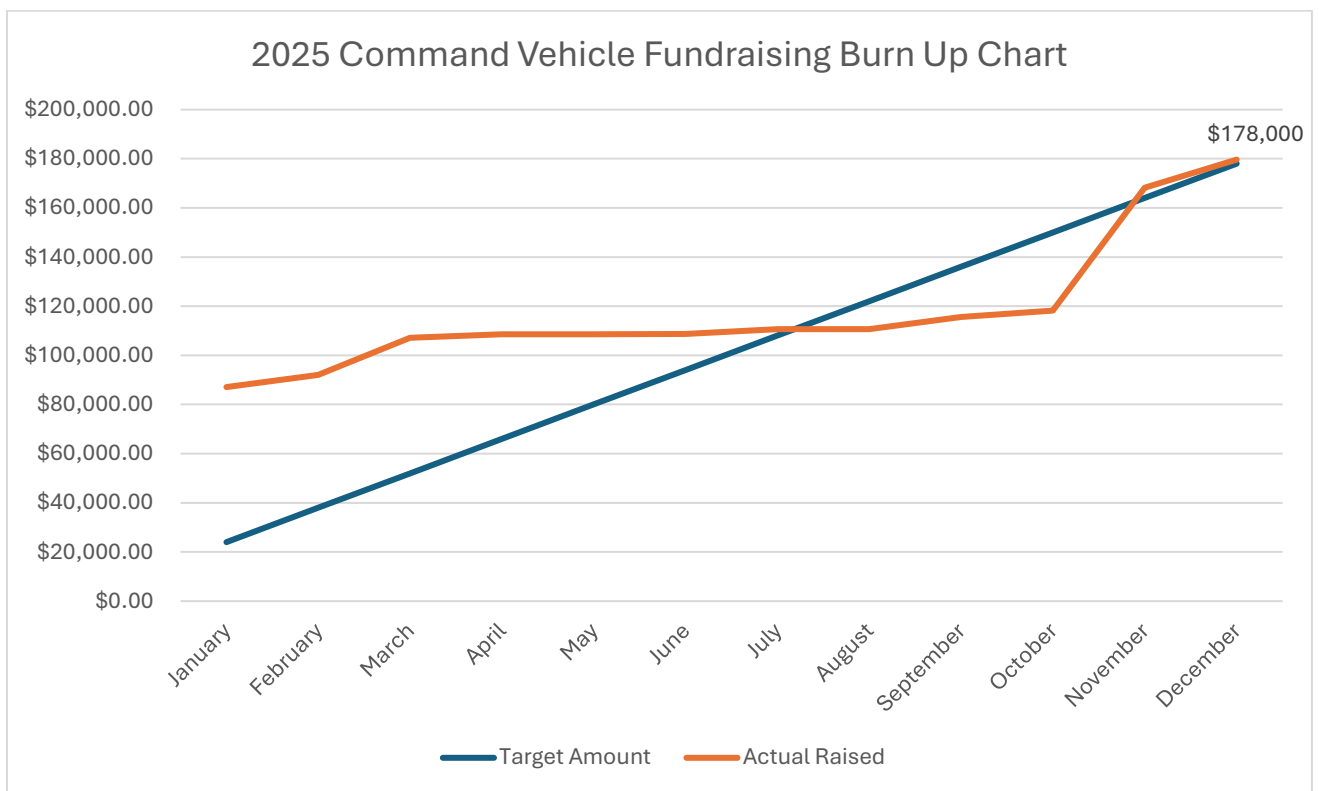
Command Vehicle Capital Campaign

In January 2025, SMR launched a capital campaign to replace our aging command vehicle, a 1996 Ford F350 truck. The primary focus of this campaign was to focus on grant funding to avoid donor fatigue with capital campaigns. We successfully received grants from Seattle Kraken One Roof Foundation, Norman Archibald Charitable Fund, The Norcliffe Foundation, 100 Women Who Care (Snoqualmie Valley) and closed the remaining gap with a grant from King County Council thanks to **Councilmember Sarah Perry**.



Above: Councilmember Perry, Raquel Lackey, Catharine Killien, Ruffles Lackey

The new command vehicle is expect to arrive in May 2026 and be mission ready in June 2026.



2025 Command Vehicle Funding Tracking & Progression

Finance Report

Seattle Mountain Rescue’s founders established the foundation of sustainable stewardship of donor funds. SMR continues to adhere to these principles. When making long-term investments or large capital investments, we think long a hard about the downstream funding needs. Our number one focus is mission response capability and building a sustainable approach to ensuring we will always be able to meet our mission to bring everyone home from the backcountry.

Financials	2025
Revenue	
Corporate Donations	\$27,900
Unrestricted Donations	\$136,900
Restricted Donations	\$76,700
Grants Received	\$59,500
Appreciated Assets Donated	\$79,000
Earnings on Investments	\$20,200
Total Revenue	\$400,200
 Expenditures	
Field Operations	\$20,400
Training	\$27,400
Membership & Resiliency	\$22,000
Vehicles	\$1,600
Facilities	\$18,400
Administration	\$13,600
Fundraising & Development	\$23,800
Total Expenditures	\$127,200
 Net Operating Revenue	\$273,000

Small Business Partners

Listed Alphabetically

Arete Coffee North Bend

<https://aretepnw.com/>



Dicks-A-Thon

<https://www.dicksathon.com/>



ProSki and Mountain Service

<https://www.proskiservice.com/>



The Line Bike Experience

<https://theline.bike/>



Volition Brewery North Bend

<https://www.volitionbrewing.com/>



Corporate Financial Contributors

Listed Alphabetically

Boeing

<https://www.boeing.com/>



Microsoft Corporation.

<https://www.microsoft.com/>



Perkins Coie

www.perkinscoie.com



Puget Sound Energy Foundation

<https://www.psefoundation.org/>



Weyerhaeuser

Education & Outreach Grant



Join the mission to bring everyone home from the backcountry!

Donate today!



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Remembering Bungee

SMR member **Bungee Lackey** passed away in February 2026 after more than 14 years of service supporting our community. Bungee joined Seattle Mountain Rescue in 2020, but his work alongside first responders began years earlier at the scene of the Oso Mudslide. Later that same year he was present at the reunification center following the Marysville Pilchuck High School shooting, where he remained a steadfast presence for staff and students for many days to follow. As a member of SMR, Bungee provided the strong, quiet support of an old friend that knows exactly what you need and when. When to listen, when to just be there for you and when to let you cry and sob on their



Bungee Lackey - 2011 to 2026

shoulder. Bungee's steady presence reminded us that rescue work is not only about technical skill in the field, but also about caring for the people who do the work. His quiet service and unwavering empathy strengthened our team in ways that will endure.

Thank you, Bungee, for the comfort and support you gave so freely.

You will be deeply missed by your teammates.