



**Town of Falmouth**  
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**NEWS RELEASE - 2023-05**

**For Immediate Release: August 20, 2023**

**For Further Information, contact Chief Howard Rice, Jr. at 207-781-2610**

**Falmouth Fire-EMS Responds to Injured Person in Presumpscot River**

On Sunday afternoon at 2:40 p.m. Falmouth Fire-EMS was called to the report of an injured person on a rock at the edge of the Presumpscot River in the Pleasant Hill area of town. The exact location was unknown, but Falmouth Dispatch was able to get a possible area near the end of Stapleford Drive. Falmouth Engine 2, Ambulance 2, and Chief Rice responded. In route, Chief Rice called for additional resources from Central Station (Utility 6 with the off-road UTV) and Station 4 (Utility 4 with the wheel and stokes).

Chief Rice arrived on scene at 2:46 p.m. along with Falmouth Police and followed closely by Ambulance 2 and Engine 2. The crew from Engine 2 was sent into the woods via a trail at the end of Stapleford Drive and a command post was set up on Stapleford Drive. The crew from Engine 2 made the approximately 750-foot hike down to the river and then went another 500 feet downstream on the riverbank to find the injured party. The hike down was slippery and steep down to the river and along the riverbank. Utility 4 arrived and a wheel with a stokes basket and rope system was sent down to the crews by the water. The patient was located on a rock near the side of the river but there was no trail to get down to him. Crews set up a z-rig rope hauling system to bring the equipment down to the patient and started treating the patient, who was injured upstream and had floated down to the current location where he was able to climb onto a large rock.

Once it was determined that the UTV would not be useful, the crew in Utility 6 returned to Central Station and hooked up the inflatable boat, responded to Mackworth Island, and prepared to launch the boat if needed. Command called Falmouth Engine 4 to the scene along with Portland Fire Department's Heavy Rescue to assist with patient extrication. Various possible routes were examined before deciding the best way out would be bringing the patient back to the trail that brought the crews in. Crews from Falmouth and Portland worked together to build 4 separate rope haul systems along the riverbank. Due to the uneven and steep terrain, at various points crews were hauling the stokes basket up a bank and at some points crews were lowering the stokes basket down a bank. Crews were able to safely get the patient up to the ambulance just after 4 p.m. and the patient was transported to the hospital.

Chief Rice credited the crews recently training with rope hauling systems and the great teamwork between the Falmouth and Portland Fire Departments and the Falmouth Police Department working together in leading to a successful extraction. All Falmouth firefighters are trained in low-angle rescue using various rope systems and the wheel and stokes basket.

Cumberland Fire Department assisted Falmouth crews with covering the Falmouth Fire Stations during the incident.

End of release.

End of release.

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