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Man Rescued from a Boat in the Raging Snohomish River

[Monroe, WA] – At 6:34 PM tonight, Snohomish Regional Fire & Rescue (SRFR) was dispatched by Sno911 for a man in a small boat going down the raging Skykomish River in Monroe near 187th Ave SE and 175th Pl SE. We do not know how the man ended up in the boat or where he entered the river, but he was able to call 911 with his cell phone and stay on the line with dispatchers to relay information about his position.

Incident command (BC31) began planning areas along the river to gain safe access for rescue crews. Because of the darkness, river conditions, and limited access, launching a boat was too dangerous for fire crews. The decision was made to stage down river at the SR 522 overpass over the Snohomish River in hopes they could get the man to grab a rope. WSP closed the highway for some time to allow firefighters to safely work.

Snohomish Fire District 4 also staged father down river.

Chief Walters with Snohomish County Fire District 53 launched their drone in the pouring rain to get a visual of the man in the boat. During this time, Sno911 was relaying more information and location of the man and boat to incident command. The man was in a small aluminum boat with no oars and had a small headlamp. Sno911 relayed that the man had passed the confluence of the Snoqualmie and Skykomish Rivers and was now in the Snohomish River heading towards SR 522.

Once the drone made visual contact with the man, BC71 positioned himself at the base of the SR 522 overpass and helped guide firefighters above the river on where to throw the rope. Sno911 was giving the man instructions of what to do when he came to the overpass. Once below the crews, SRFR Firefighter Brooks tossed the line and it landed in the boat. The man grabbed the rope and stood up, causing the boat to turn 180 degrees with the transom of the boat facing the strong currents. The power of the river ripped the boat from under the man tossing him out of the boat and into the river filled with large tree debris and heavy currents.

The man began to swim to the shore just west of SR 522 and east of Three Rivers Mobile Home Park and was able to hold onto a stable tree in the river. At 7:40PM SRFR crews cut through thick blackberry bushes and pulled the man to safety. The victim with no shoes walked on his own power to a medic unit close by and was transported to a local hospital.



From the first reported location to the spot firefighters rescued him is approximately 4 miles. The man was in the over an hour in the river. 23 members from SRFR, SCFD53, SCFD4, and the Sheriff's office were on scene.

Flooding rivers are extremely dangerous to enter. It is never advised to get into any boat or kayak when a river is running fast.

And never drive past road closures due to water over the roadway. It is extremely dangerous.

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