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Join Us. 

The following letter was sent to Vail Mountain Rescue Group from Vail Fire & Emergency Services Fire Chief Mark Novak. VMRG participated in the rescue and recovery operations after a truck drove off I-70 this week:

On September 21, 2017 Vail Fire and Emergency Services (VFES) responded to an unusually challenging incident. A semi-truck had driven off of I-70 and plunged into a deep ravine east of the Town of Vail. Upon arrival VFES crews found the trailer of the vehicle hanging from a cliff while the cab of the truck was at the bottom of a deep ravine and was actively burning.



Knowing that this was going to be a challenging incident that would require additional personnel skilled in technical rescue, our incident commander called for the assistance of Vail Mountain Rescue. Upon their arrival at scene, Vail Mountain Rescue personnel were a great asset to the rescue effort. This rescue effort was particularly complex as it involved a high angle rope system and fire suppression activities. The incident was further complicated by the fact that the cab of the truck was in Gore Creek with a waterfall immediately above and below it. Once the fire was extinguished, rescuers entered the water, which was contaminated with diesel to search for the driver.



The next day, approximately 15 members of VMR again took time off from their jobs to return to the scene to assist with the body recovery. This operation took approximately 6 hours. During this time, VMR members integrated seamlessly with members of VFES and Eagle River Fire Protection

District. VMR members served in the Unified Command, as rescue technicians and provided much needed logistical support. Throughout the operation, VMR members demonstrated a high level of professionalism and competence. Without their assistance completing this mission would have been much more difficult.

This incident is yet another example of the selfless dedication that is demonstrated by the volunteer members of VMR many times throughout the year. It is without reservation that I state that VMR is an indispensable resource to all who live in, or visit the Vail Valley.

Sincerely,

Mark Novak Fire Chief

Thank you for supporting Friends of Mountain Rescue.

With great appreciation,

Thomas Howard

President, Friends of Mountain Rescue

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