

Beat: News

Outdoors journalist feared dead on Mt. Rainier in Washington

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USPA News - Rescue workers have recovered a body in the search for a well-known and experienced outdoors journalist who went missing while working on a story about Mount Rainier in the U.S. state of Washington, just weeks after another deadly accident at the 14,411 feet (4,392 meters)-high mountain. Karen Sykes, 70, of Seattle, went missing on Wednesday when she was hiking the Owyhigh Lakes Trail with a partner.

Sykes had continued by herself after they encountered snow at 4,500 to 5,000 feet (1.3 to 1.5 kilometers) in elevation at around 3 p.m., and the pair agreed they would later meet at the point where they separated. Sykes was reported missing at 10:30 p.m. after she failed to return. Approximately 110 people, including volunteers and staff from several national parks, participated in the days-long search-and-rescue operation, said Mount Rainier National Park spokeswoman Patti Wold. The operation was suspended at about 3 p.m. on Saturday afternoon when the body of a woman was located in the search area. Although the body is believed to be of Sykes, authorities said the Pierce County Medical Examiner's Office would formally establish the identity of the victim. "The victim was discovered off-trail near the eastern branch of Boundary Creek in rough, steep terrain," Wold said. "The area is difficult to access and not commonly traveled." Sykes, a long-time outdoors writer and marathon runner, was considered to be a knowledgeable and experienced hiker who was well-known in the hiking community. Authorities had initially held out hopes that Sykes could have survived on the mountain as she had adequate survival gear to overnight in the event of an emergency. The accident comes just weeks after a party of six, consisting of two skilled climbing guides and four clients, were killed in a fall of 3,300 feet (1,005 meters) at Mount Rainier. The bodies of the victims have not been located, and officials have said there is no certainty that recovery will ever be possible due to the location of the accident. The accident on May 30 was the single worst loss of life at Mount Rainier since 11 climbers were killed in an ice avalanche on the mountain's Ingraham Glacier in June 1981. More recently, four climbers died of hypothermia near the top of the Paradise Glacier on Mount Rainier in January 2012, though only three of the bodies have been recovered so far.

Article online:

<https://www.uspa24.com/bericht-2344/outdoors-journalist-feared-dead-on-mt-rainier-in-washington.html>

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