

I am submitting this rescue incident, as it is one of the most recent events in which we need the RDC. It proved to be very valuable in saving this man's life. I am the lead-instructor in swiftwater rescue for our department and these guys did an outstanding job, especially since we are in the infancy of our water rescue program.

Thanks for taking the time to read.

Respectfully,

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Water Rescue Incident

At approximately 10:10 a.m. on the morning of December, 31, 2004 the Technical Rescue Team (TRT) was dispatched along with Company 19 and Car 102 to the Chattahoochee River for a possible water rescue. A man was thrown from his fishing craft and now in the water.

Engine 19 arrived on the scene and gave a situation report that a person appeared to be trapped under a capsized watercraft in the middle of the river. Command was assumed by Car 102, and then Truck 19 and Squad 4 arrived on scene.

The craft appeared to be a one-person fishing vessel made of two fabric pontoons and a webbing seat with oars. The man was trapped by the craft and entanglements from the fishing lines and anchor line attached to the craft. The victim had a heavy sweater and fishing waders on that had filled with water making it difficult to stay afloat, even with the personal flotation device (PFD) he was wearing. The PFD has loosened and was up around his neck.

The water was moving very swift this day and an action plan was made to put three rescuers from the TRT on the Rapid Deployment Craft (RDC) upstream and paddle down to the victim. Due to the current and location of the victim, it was decided to reduce the risk of missing the victim and not being able to paddle against the current, we would bump the victims craft with the RDC to assure contact for the rescue.

Engine 19's crew established an upstream spotter and downstream safeties. Marietta Fire Department's Squad was called for, as they have some water rescue equipment and personnel.

The crew on the RDC (Lt. Bentley, FF Hiller & FF Reddy) made contact with the victim. Lt. Bentley & FF Reddy entered the water while FF Hiller kept the RDC at the victim and his craft to assist. They immediately started to disentangle the victim and cut the waders from his body. The victim was lifted onto the RDC and we began to paddle to shore.

The National Park Service arrived with their boat, threw a tow line, but it got tangled in the prop. The tag line was cut; we continued to paddle the RDC to shore, where the victim was turned over to the awaiting ambulance paramedics for treatment and transport to a hospital. The victim survived with only having suffered hypothermia.