



9/6/24 Media Release

Woman Missing 12 Days in Nevada County Found Alive

Nevada City, CA – On Sept. 6, 2024, Nevada County Sheriff's Office (NCSO) deputies located 24-year-old Esmeralda Marie Pineda on the top of the river canyon in the vicinity of the Yuba River and Sweetland Creek in Nevada City.

Deputies located Pineda at 12:41 p.m., severely dehydrated and emaciated. She required immediate medical attention. The deputies radioed for life flight and the California Highway Patrol responded with their helicopter; North San Juan Fire Department firefighters also responded for medical.

Pineda was airlifted off the canyon by 1:20 p.m. and was transported to a hospital for treatment. The extent of her condition and injuries is unknown.

“The Sheriff's Office and our search and rescue volunteers covered extensive ground throughout our search, and we are thankful today to find her alive,” said NCSO Sergeant Dustin Moe.

The search for Pineda began on Aug. 26 after she reportedly went missing from a mining camp in the vicinity of the middle fork of the Yuba River and Sweetland Creek in Nevada City. The search began the same day and the area in question was treacherous in nature and required skilled Nevada County Sheriff's Search and Rescue volunteers to repel into and out of the canyon to look for her. As part of today's search efforts, Sergeant Moe and his partner utilized the department's off-highway vehicle razor (aka a side-by-side) to search in more mountainous areas. Their search paid off when they came across Pineda 12 days after she was initially reported missing.

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