

WILDLAND ROPE RESCUE TEAMS

OVERVIEW AND TRAINING SOLUTIONS



REMS - Rapid Extrication Module Support

REMS teams are the wildland fire resource answer to austere injuries and illnesses. They were first seen around the 2014 fire season as a solution to some of the extrication and transport problems that led to firefighter deaths in the preceding years (see the 2008 Dutch Creek Medical Incident).

The world of contract and cooperator REMS teams is quickly evolving. In 2024 the National Wildfire Coordinating Group (NWCG) published PMS 552, taking effect in 2025. That document specified the types of required equipment and training expected from REMS team members as well as adding hydraulic vehicle extrication tools to the REMS cache.

“The REMS team aims to swiftly transport incapacitated firefighters off the fireline, ensuring they receive timely and appropriate medical care.”

- NWCG PMS 552

REMS TEAM TYPING

NWCG PMS 552 officially “typed” REMS teams like all other wildland fire resources, but resource ordering is still done through AIMS rather than VIPR like other medical resources.



TYPE I

4 Personnel

1-2, 4x4 Vehicle(s)

REMS Cache

ALS Cache

1 Paramedic and 1 EMT

UTV & trailer

Patient transport capable

TYPE II

4 Personnel

1-2, 4x4 Vehicle(s)

REMS Cache

ALS or BLS Cache

2 EMTs

UTV & trailer (recommended)

Patient transport capable
(recommended)

TYPE III

(FORMERLY CALLED A “RAT” TEAM)

2 Personnel

1 4x4 Vehicle

REMS Cache

ALS or BLS Cache

1 Paramedic or 1 EMT

UTV (recommended)

N/A

PERSONNEL TRAINING

Currently, REMS team members need to have certification of education meeting or exceeding NFPA 1006 training requirements. However, the industry is rapidly moving towards REMS team members taking and passing a professional qualification test to prove competence.



TYPE I

4 Rope Rescue Technicians
(Recommended)

Team Lead – Single Resource
Boss Qualified*

Vehicle Extrication
Training

Firefighter 1 or 2
Wildland Qualified
(all team members)

TYPE II

2 Rope Rescue Technicians
2 Rope Rescue Operations

Team Lead – Single Resource
Boss Qualified*

Vehicle Extrication
Training

Firefighter 1 or 2
Wildland Qualified
(all team members)

TYPE III

(FORMERLY CALLED A “RAT” TEAM)

2 Rope Rescue Technicians
1 Rope Rescue Operations

N/A

N/A

Firefighter 1 or 2
Wildland Qualified
(all team members)

**The single resource boss qualification requirement is not currently being enforced and may be replaced by a FFTI team lead requirement instead*

MINIMUM EQUIPMENT LISTS

TYPE I

1,500' Rope [9.5mm (3/8") to 12.5 mm (1/2")]
5 Descent control devices
2 High efficiency multi-purpose rope rescue devices
22 Carabineers
8 Small or mini prusik minding pulley
4 Small or mini prusik minding double pulley
1 Gathering plate or "O" ring
16 Prusiks (e.g., traditional, sewn, eye to eye)
12 20' Long webbing/sling/cord
12 Various sizes of webbing/sling/cord
1 Edge protection kit
1 Roll up rescue stretcher or equivalent
1 Collapsible multi-piece litter with hoist pre-rig
1 Backboard
1 Sleeping bag (patient padding)
5 Pickets and sledgehammer
Rope rescue gear packs for the above listed gear
4 Line gear with fire shelter
4 Hand tools
Litter wheel with tire repair kit
1 GPS Device
Flagging
5 Class II or III harnesses
1 Class II victim harness
1 Set of four mechanical advantage system
1 Combination extrication tool
1 Cribbing for stabilization
1 Reciprocating saw
1 High lift jack
1 Portable Generator or inverter
1 Basic toolbox including jumper cables
(maintenance, tire changes etc.)

TYPE II

1,500' Rope [9.5mm (3/8") to 12.5 mm (1/2")]
5 Descent control devices
2 High efficiency multi-purpose rope rescue devices
22 Carabineers
8 Small or mini prusik minding pulley
4 Small or mini prusik minding double pulley
1 Gathering plate or "O" ring
16 Prusiks (e.g., traditional, sewn, eye to eye)
12 20' Long webbing/sling/cord
12 Various sizes of webbing/sling/cord
1 Edge protection kit
1 Roll up rescue stretcher or equivalent
1 Collapsible multi-piece litter with hoist pre-rig
1 Backboard
1 Sleeping bag (patient padding)
5 Pickets and sledgehammer
Rope rescue gear packs for the above listed gear
4 Line gear with fire shelter
4 Hand tools
Litter wheel with tire repair kit
1 GPS Device
Flagging
4 Class II or III harnesses
1 Class II victim harness
1 Set of four mechanical advantage system

1 Reciprocating saw
1 High lift jack

1 Basic toolbox including jumper cables
(maintenance, tire changes etc.)

TYPE III

1,200' Rope [9.5mm (3/8") to 12.5 mm (1/2")]
3 Descent control devices
2 High efficiency multi-purpose rope rescue devices
22 Carabineers
8 Small or mini prusik minding pulley
4 Small or mini prusik minding double pulley
1 Gathering plate or "O" ring
16 Prusiks (e.g., traditional, sewn, eye to eye)
12 20' Long webbing/sling/cord
12 Various sizes of webbing/sling/cord
1 Edge protection kit
1 Roll up rescue stretcher or equivalent
1 Collapsible multi-piece litter with hoist pre-rig
1 Backboard
1 Sleeping bag (patient padding)
5 Pickets and sledgehammer
Rope rescue gear packs for the above listed gear
2 Line gear with fire shelter
2 Hand tools
Litter wheel with tire repair kit
1 GPS Device
Flagging
3 Class II or III harnesses
1 Class II victim harness
1 Set of four mechanical advantage system

1 Reciprocating saw
1 High lift jack

1 Basic toolbox including jumper cables
(maintenance, tire changes etc.)

ADDITIONAL EXPECTATIONS



REMS teams have been advertised and utilized as an all hazards rescue team, reflected in the addition of the vehicle extrication training and equipment.

While rope rescue, EMS, and vehicle extrication certifications are currently all required, it's not uncommon to have a REMS team's assignment extended because of swift water rescue capabilities.



Helicopters are often plan A in austere environments. REMs team members will be expected to work with government and private flight services in the event of patient extrication.

WILDLAND ROPE RESCUE TEAMS: **TRAINING SOLUTIONS**



LEARN MORE



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Southwest Rescue offers training and professional qualification solutions to both contractors and government cooperators that exceed industry requirements.