

U.S. Department of
Homeland Security

United States
Coast Guard



Commander
United States Coast Guard
Sector Humboldt Bay

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1710
23 March 2022

North Coast Redwoods District State Parks Lifeguards
4150 Patricks Point Dr,
Trinidad, CA 95570

Ranger Harder,

I'd like to send my personal appreciation to the North Coast Redwoods District State Parks Lifeguards for your past, present, and future support of Coast Guard operations, and your partnership in keeping the people of Northern California safe. Members of your unit and the Junior Lifeguard program have bravely responded to numerous incidents along the Redwood Coast, safeguarding the public and assisting Coast Guard response efforts.

The availability of lifeguards at our local beaches and rocky coastal outcroppings is invaluable due to the remote and treacherous nature of the coastline. Your local knowledge has been vital in a number of recent cases. Most notably during the search for missing canoer, Hunter Lewis, when he went missing off of Trinidad Head in the early part of 2022. The Coast Guard and State Parks Lifeguards, along with several local and volunteer organizations, conducted searches for days in hopes of finding Mr. Lewis. Although unsuccessful, the efficient coordination between our agencies undoubtedly resulted in the most thorough search possible and speaks to the value of our continued partnership.

Lastly, your team has worked with our Aviation Survival Technicians (helicopter rescue swimmers) to share local knowledge and bolster training opportunities. Notably, your lifeguards are some of the only civilians in the country trained and authorized to act as Rescue Swimmer Training Survivors (RSTS), playing the role of distressed mariners in the water who can be assessed and 'rescued' by our aircrews. RSTSs are a crucial component of realistic training, and have helped our swimmers maintain proficiency and save 11 lives in the last year.

Thank you for being a force multiplier, we look forward to continuing our partnership in public service, working together and sharing best practices to keep our beautiful coastline safe and when necessary, save lives of those in peril on the sea. We deeply appreciate the Lifeguards' valuable knowledge and their dedication to protecting the people of the Redwood coast.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Joseph W. Matthews" with "CDR, USCG" written in smaller letters to the right.

Joseph W. Matthews
Commander, U.S. Coast Guard