

Woman rescued after 40-hour ordeal in Eldorado National Forest

By John Scheibe, Ventura County Star

“We love you,” one woman yelled as Lauren Ellen DeLaTorre recounted her two nights lost in the woods high above much of California in the Eldorado National Forest over the long July Fourth weekend.

The 53-year-old Camarillo woman had gone for a hike Saturday with a group of friends and got separated from them after deciding to go back to her cabin.

“It was really something,” DeLaTorre said Tuesday night as she stood in front of Tierra Linda Elementary School in Camarillo, where she teaches kindergartners. She recounted what it was like to get separated from her friends and then realize she was lost and alone in a big forest.

Her leg and arms were badly scratched from her nearly 40-hour ordeal.

After realizing she was lost, DeLaTorre’s instinct was to climb to higher ground, even though this would mean leaving the area where she first got separated from her friends.

In trying to find higher ground, DeLaTorre got farther away from where searchers would eventually look for her.

Fortunately, DeLaTorre once worked for the U.S. Forest Service. She is well-versed on what someone who is lost should do, including making sure they have as warm a place as possible to sleep at night and drink plenty of water.

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