

*Maine*  
Cumberland **County**  
POSITION PAPER FOR AGENDA ITEM

<b>TO:</b>	Cumberland County Commissioners
<b>FROM:</b>	Michael Durkin, Director-Cumberland County Emergency Management Agency
<b>DATE:</b>	3/25/2024
<b>SUBJECT:</b>	Wilderness Rescue Team

**Requested Action:**

CCEMA requests that the Commissioners authorize the signing of a Memorandum of Agreement between Cumberland County Emergency Management Agency (CCEMA) and the Wilderness Rescue Team (WRT).

**Background & Purpose of Request:**

In 2021, CCEMA conducted a Capabilities and Gap Analysis (CAGA) to identify areas of relative strength and weakness in the County’s ability to respond to disaster. The CAGA ranked twenty three different core capabilities from one (least capability) to four (most capability). The average score for a capability was 2.5.

One of the lower capabilities was “Mass Search and Rescue” which was scored as 2.1. This low score is believed to be due to the difficulty of search and rescue. These events require a great degree of manpower and coordination. In addition, they occur at a nexus of different technical skills (emergency medicine, high/low angle rescue/search management, etc). In short, Mass Search and Rescue is a team sport and the County needed more players. With this in mind, CCEMA began looking at how it could contribute to building up the search and rescue capability.

The Wilderness Search and Rescue Team is an all-volunteer, non-profit corporations that has been providing Search and Rescue services for over 40 years. Their mission is to provide search, technical rescue and medical services. The team is active with monthly trainings and Statewide deployments.

Entering into this agreement with the Wilderness Rescue Team is CCEMA’s first step towards building the Mass Search and Rescue capability within the County. The MOA brings the team’s specializations in wilderness medicine, technical rescue and mass search to the County. In return, CCEMA will provide a centralized location to store team assets at the Windham bunker as well as a link to FEMA grant programs.

**Funding Amount and Source: NA**

**Effective Date:**

This MOA goes into effect upon signature of the County Manager. The MOA automatically renews annually but can be terminated by either party upon 30 days written notice.

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**Attachments:**

Memorandum of Agreement regarding Wilderness Search and Rescue Services for Cumberland County  
(3 pages)