

Plane Hits Peak With 13 Aboard

Rescue Plane Crew Reports Signs of Life in Crash Near Crest Highway

Hope for life amid wreckage of a twin-engined Army cargo plane carrying 13 persons, which crashed against the north side of Strawberry Peak, six miles off Angeles Crest Highway, in a blinding rainstorm Saturday night was held by rescue parties at midnight last night as they abandoned efforts to reach the scene and awaited daylight to begin their trek over the mountainous region.

Army aerial observers who spotted the wreckage at 4 p.m. yesterday after an all-day search for the missing plane reported that they saw what they believed to be a man waving and other signs of life as they circled above the site late yesterday.

Report Small Fire

They also reported seeing a small fire a short distance from the wreckage. There was a chance, the observers believed, that the fire was a signal built by survivors of the crash.

Two small rescue parties started out for the scene of the crash early last night.

One, composed of two Army medical officers and U.S. Forest Rangers, carried walkie-talkies. However, no information had been received by midnight concerning their progress over the rugged terrain, or, if they had reached the wreckage, their findings there.

The second party consisted of two Army Air Forces officers led by a ranger.

Starting to Snow

Additional rescuers who are expected to be in the trek to the wreckage this morning include deputy sheriffs, forest rangers, personnel from the County Prison Camp, and Army officers. Reports from Angeles Crest at midnight said it was starting to snow up there. Because of the terrain and uncertain weather conditions, the number of hours it will take to reach the scene this morning could not be estimated.

According to Army officials, the plane was enroute from St. Joseph, Mo., and was scheduled to arrive at Mines Field at 8 p.m. Saturday. All persons aboard were Army personnel.

The area where the plane went down is a treacherous mountain region where numerous civilian transports have crashed.