

We hope that both of them will be a bit more aggressive when providing advice to their climbing partners after this incident.

A couple of self-rescue suggestions. After a fall like Tommy's, consider providing a belay with the tag line, and even a counter-weight haul, to protect and assist your freaked-out partner as he ascends the potentially damaged lead line. In addition, Tommy was carrying both cell phones and both headlamps in the daypack. Now they each carry their own all the time. (Source: Tommy, Taylor, and John Dill, NPS Ranger)

## **VARIOUS FALLS ON SNOW – CAUSES INCLUDED OFF ROUTE, SEPARATED FROM GROUP, INADEQUATE FOOTWEAR (SNEAKERS), ICE AXES ON PACKS, FALLING ROCK, AND ONE HAPE FATALITY**

### **California, Mount Shasta, Avalanche Gulch**

The five climbing incidents on Mount Shasta were in the usual location: Avalanche Gulch.

The causes generally involved an inability to self-arrest or to continue on. The falling rock case resulted in a 300-foot fall and an open fracture. There was one HAPE fatality that occurred on the Clear Creek Route. Another curious fatality—not climbing-related—happened when an individual who was part of a religious/ceremonial group decided to hike on his own “to place a rock on top of the mountain.” He was eventually found in the upper Old Ski bowl area. He was wearing sweatpants and a light shirt and wore no shoes.

The climbing ranger report indicated the following: Mount Shasta had a similar season to the 2009-10 winter with a strong La Nina pattern influencing weather patterns and brought an above normal precipitation to the region. Snow accumulation was 164% of the historical average for 2011. Similar to last season, our spring was disguised with winter weather, cooler temperatures, and above normal precipitation through June. This caused late winter climbing conditions to extend into the beginning of July, which meant firm, smooth snow, making for good climbing but very dangerous if a fall is taken and self-arrest is not immediately performed successfully. As a result, the conditions were ripe for several searches and rescues. Climbing conditions remained in good shape through September. (Source: Nicklaus Meyers, US Forest Service Lead Climbing Ranger & Avalanche Specialist)

## **DISLODGED ROCK – FALLING ROCK**

### **Colorado, Shelf Road**

I was belaying my partner on January 16. We were climbing a new route not in the guidebook when he kicked off a baseball-sized rock from approximately 60 feet up. It made a direct hit, striking the center of my skull! Luckily I was wearing a helmet. We recognized the potential for loose rock before getting on the climb.