

17 Men Rescued in California 17 Hours After Tunnel Cave-In

GORMAN, Calif., Dec. 21 (UPI)—Rescue workers broke through tons of rubble late tonight and rescued 17 sandhogs entrapped in the collapse of a construction tunnel deep beneath the snowy Tehachapi Mountains.

Rescuers digging through a huge mound of shale and dirt that blocked the mountain bore, part of the \$2.8-billion California Water Project, reached the trapped men shortly after 11 P.M.

The freed men leaped on their rescuers, embracing them and shaking hands.

William Gianelli, an engineer, who directed the rescue effort, said, "Everyone's fine."

The 17 trapped men, uninjured and seemingly untroubled by their ordeal, were caught by a rock and mudslide 17 hours earlier in the Carley V. Porter tunnel as they prepared to end their graveyard shift.

They had been isolated 125 feet underground inside a mile-long, 20-foot-wide horizontal shaft but had been in no immediate danger. They had electricity, and food and fresh



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air were supplied through an eight-inch pipe.

The California Water Project is designed to bring water from Northern California to arid Southern California by 1972. A co-sponsor of the bill authorizing construction of the project was State Assemblyman Carley V. Porter of Los Angeles, after whom the tunnel was named.

Gov. Ronald Reagan arrived on the scene shortly before dusk. He inspected rescue efforts and talked with the wife of one of the men trapped underground, Mrs. John Saulsbury of Bakersfield.

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