

**National Interagency Coordination Center  
Incident Management Situation Report  
Friday, July 17, 2015 - 0530 MT  
National Preparedness Level 2**

**National Fire Activity**

Initial attack activity:	Light (121 new fires)
New large incidents:	10
Large fires contained:	2
Uncontained large fires: **	6
Area Command Teams committed:	0
NIMOs committed:	0
Type 1 IMTs committed:	1
Type 2 IMTs committed:	5

\*\* Uncontained large fires include only fires being managed under a full suppression strategy.

[Link](#) to Geographic Area daily reports.

Three wildland fire suppression crews and seven fireline management personnel are assigned to support large fires in Alberta, Canada. Two wildland fire suppression crews and twenty-three fireline management personnel are assigned to support large fires in Saskatchewan, Canada.

**Alaska Area (PL 4)**

New fires:	4
New large incidents:	6
Uncontained large fires:	1
Type 2 IMTs committed:	3

**Tanana Area Fires (5 fires)**, Tanana Zone, BLM. IMT 2 (Grant). Started on native corporation land seven miles northeast of Tanana, AK. Timber. Active fire behavior with running, torching and spotting. Numerous structures threatened. Evacuations in effect.

**Aggie Creek**, Fairbanks Area Forestry, DOF. IMT 2 (Nieto). Thirty miles northwest of Fairbanks, AK. Timber. Moderate fire behavior with single tree torching and backing. Numerous structures threatened.

**Middle Yukon Fires (4 fires)**, Galena Zone, BLM. Started on native corporation land two miles north of Nulato, AK. Timber. No new information.

**Baker**, Tanana Zone, BLM. IMT 2 (Greer). IMT is also managing the Hay Slough fire. Started on state land four miles southwest of Eureka, AK. Timber. Minimal fire behavior with creeping and smoldering. Structures threatened. Reduction in acreage due to more accurate mapping.

**Hay Slough**, Tanana Zone, BLM. Fourteen miles southeast of Tanana, AK. Timber. Moderate fire behavior with creeping and smoldering. Structures threatened.

**Aniak Complex (4 fires)**, Southwest Area Forestry, DOF. One mile east of Aniak, AK. Timber. Minimal fire behavior. Precipitation occurred over the fire area yesterday.

**Rex Complex (2 fires)**, Fairbanks Area Forestry, DOF. Started on private land seven miles southeast of Clear, AK. Timber. Moderate fire behavior with isolated torching, creeping and smoldering. Structures threatened.

**Tetlin Hills**, Tok Area Forestry, DOF. Eight miles southeast of Tok, AK. Timber. Moderate fire behavior with single tree torching, creeping and smoldering.

**Long Lake**, Tok Area Forestry, DOF. Started on BIA land two miles east of Northway, AK. Timber. Moderate fire behavior with torching and creeping. Structures threatened.

**Rock**, Tanana Zone, BLM. Started on native corporation land nine miles southeast of Hughes, AK. Timber. Active fire behavior with single tree torching, backing and creeping. Numerous structures threatened.

\* **Ruby Area Fires**, Tanana Zone, BLM. Includes previously reported Bruno Creek, Big Creek and Trail Creek fires. Twenty-six miles southeast of Ruby, AK. Timber. Minimal fire behavior with single tree torching and creeping. Structures threatened. Last report unless significant activity occurs.

**Torment Creek**, Tanana Zone, BLM. Previously reported incident. Forty miles northwest of Rampart, AK. Timber and short grass. Minimal fire behavior with single tree torching, backing and creeping. Structures threatened. Last report unless significant activity occurs.

**McCormick**, Tanana Zone, BLM. Previously reported incident. Fifty miles northeast of Tanana, AK. Timber. Moderate fire behavior with isolated torching, flanking and backing. Last report unless significant activity occurs.

\* **Black Sand**, Tanana Zone, BLM. Started on state land 32 miles northeast of Ruby, AK. Timber. Minimal fire behavior. Last report unless significant activity occurs.

**Chitanatala**, Tanana Zone, BLM. Previously reported incident. Forty-three miles north of Lake Minchumina, AK. Timber. Moderate fire behavior with single tree torching, backing and creeping. Last report unless significant activity occurs.

\* **Little Salt**, Tanana Zone, BLM. Seventeen miles southeast of Stevens Village, AK. Timber. Minimal fire behavior with smoldering and creeping. Last report unless significant activity occurs.

\* **U. S. Creek**, Fairbanks Area Forestry, DOF. Forty-four miles northeast of Fairbanks, AK. Timber. Minimal fire behavior. Last report unless significant activity occurs.

\* **Selawik River**, Galena Zone, BLM. Started on FWS land 100 miles north of Galena, AK. Timber. Active fire behavior with running and backing. Last report unless significant activity occurs.

\* **Lockwood**, Galena Zone, BLM. Started on NPS land seventy miles east of Allakaket, AK. Timber. Active fire behavior with short-range spotting, isolated torching and backing. Last report unless significant activity occurs.

Incident Name	Unit	Size		%	Ctn / Comp	Est	Personnel			Resources			Strc Lost	\$\$ CTD	Origin Own
		Acres	Chge				Total	Chge	Crews	Eng	Heli				
Tanana Area Fires	AK-TAD	484,188	5,457	1	Comp	NR	334	15	8	0	2	0	8.8M	TRI	
Aggie Creek	AK-FAS	31,885	0	44	Comp	NR	375	-47	9	6	7	0	10M	ST	
Middle Yukon	AK-GAD	347,732	---	0	Comp	NR	60	---	2	0	0	0	1.8M	TRI	

Incident Name	Unit	Size		%	Ctn / Comp	Est	Personnel		Resources			Strc Lost	\$\$ CTD	Origin Own
		Acres	Chge				Total	Chge	Crews	Eng	Heli			
Baker	AK-TAD	27,063	-38	85	Comp	NR	246	7	8	4	2	0	3.1M	ST
Hay Slough	AK-TAD	89,766	5,199	70	Comp	NR	21	0	1	2	0	0	138K	BLM
Aniak Complex	AK-SWS	155,072	1,614	8	Comp	NR	156	1	5	0	3	0	5.9M	ST
Rex Complex	AK-FAS	16,159	0	63	Comp	NR	241	-11	11	2	3	8	12.5M	PRI
Tetlin Hills	AK-TAS	1,878	0	75	Ctn	7/22	122	-4	3	0	1	0	5.7M	ST
Long Lake	AK-TAS	23,430	0	25	Comp	7/25	147	-5	6	1	2	0	3.9M	BIA
Rock	AK-TAD	60,019	0	0	Comp	NR	55	1	3	0	0	0	467K	TRI
* Ruby Area Fires	AK-TAD	395,115	---	0	Comp	NR	91	---	3	0	2	0	1.9M	BLM
Torment Creek	AK-TAD	100,109	26,023	0	Comp	NR	0	0	0	0	0	0	3K	BLM
McCormick	AK-TAD	25,615	13,057	0	Comp	NR	0	0	0	0	0	0	1K	BLM
* Black Sand	AK-TAD	13,949	---	0	Comp	UNK	0	---	0	0	0	0	3K	ST
Chitanatala	AK-TAD	12,486	6,892	0	Comp	NR	0	0	0	0	0	0	2K	BLM
* Little Salt	AK-TAD	530	---	0	Comp	NR	0	---	0	0	0	0	1K	BLM
* U. S. Creek	AK-FAS	482	---	0	Comp	NR	0	---	0	0	0	0	33K	ST
* Selawik River	AK-GAD	300	---	0	Comp	NR	8	---	0	0	0	0	1K	FWS
* Lockwood	AK-GAD	100	---	0	Comp	NR	0	---	0	0	0	0	1K	NPS

### **Northwest Area (PL 2)**

New fires: 14  
New large incidents: 1  
Uncontained large fires: 3  
Type 1 IMTs committed: 1  
Type 2 IMTs committed: 1

**Newby Lake**, Okanogan-Wenatchee NF. IMT 1 (Lewis). Twelve miles northwest of Loomis, WA. Timber. Minimal fire behavior with isolated torching, creeping and smoldering. Road, area and trail closures in effect.

**Corner Creek**, Ochoco NF. Eleven miles south of Dayville, OR. Timber, light logging slash and short grass. Minimal fire behavior with smoldering. Structures and sage-grouse habitat threatened. Road and area closures in effect.

\* **Outlaw Draw**, Spokane District, BLM. Eighteen miles east of Waterville, WA. Brush. Minimal fire behavior. Sage-grouse habitat threatened.

**Buckskin**, Rogue River-Siskiyou NF. Previously reported incident. Ten miles southwest of Cave Junction, OR. Closed timber litter and brush. Minimal fire behavior with creeping and smoldering. Road, area and trail closures in effect. Last report unless significant activity occurs.

**Mt Adams Complex**, Gifford Pinchot NF. Transfer of command from IMT 2 (Gales) back to the local unit will occur on 7/18. Fifteen miles northwest of Trout Lake, WA. Timber and closed timber litter. No new information.

Incident Name	Unit	Size		%	Ctn / Comp	Est	Personnel		Resources			Strc Lost	\$\$ CTD	Origin Own
		Acres	Chge				Total	Chge	Crews	Eng	Heli			
Newby Lake	WA-OWF	5,065	0	20	Comp	NR	479	-40	12	3	7	0	5.7M	FS
Corner Creek	OR-OCF	29,407	0	90	Ctn	NR	97	-4	0	9	2	1	12M	FS
* Outlaw Draw	WA-SPD	2,000	---	60	Ctn	NR	80	---	2	13	0	0	150K	BLM
Buckskin	OR-RSF	5,345	0	60	Ctn	9/30	37	0	2	0	0	0	8.3M	FS
Mt Adams Complex	WA-GPF	405	---	78	Comp	11/01	209	---	5	1	4	0	4.3M	FS
Jones Canyon	OR-952S	840	0	100	Ctn	---	2	-89	0	1	0	0	850K	BLM

952S – John Day Unit, DOF

**Northern Rockies Area (PL 2)**

New fires: 8  
 New large incidents: 0  
 Uncontained large fires: 1  
 Type 2 IMTs committed: 1

**Cape Horn**, Pend Oreille Field Office, IDL. IMT 2 (Fry). Three miles northeast of Bayview, ID. Timber. Minimal fire behavior with creeping and smoldering.

Incident Name	Unit	Size		%	Ctn / Comp	Est	Personnel		Resources			Strc Lost	\$\$ CTD	Origin Own
		Acres	Chge				Total	Chge	Crews	Eng	Heli			
Cape Horn	ID-POS	1,326	0	85	Ctn	7/17	338	-78	8	9	3	14	5.5M	ST
Bales	MT-MCD	5,738	0	100	Ctn	---	0	-165	0	0	0	2	800K	PRI

MCD – Mile City District, BLM

**Southwest Area (PL 2)**

New fires: 9  
 New large incidents: 2  
 Uncontained large fires: 0

\* **Rebel**, Coconino NF. Ten miles northeast of Washington Park, AZ. Timber. Minimal fire behavior. Last report unless significant activity occurs.

**Jar Complex**, Kaibab NF. Previously reported incident. Six miles southeast of Tusayan, AZ. Timber. Minimal fire behavior. Last report unless significant activity occurs.

\* **Woods Tank**, Coronado NF. Eighteen miles northeast of Tucson, AZ. Brush and short grass. Moderate fire behavior with uphill runs and creeping. Last report unless significant activity occurs.

Incident Name	Unit	Size		%	Ctn / Comp	Est	Personnel		Resources			Strc Lost	\$\$ CTD	Origin Own
		Acres	Chge				Total	Chge	Crews	Eng	Heli			
* Rebel	AZ-COF	1,500	---	50	Comp	7/31	6	---	0	1	0	0	25K	FS
Jar Complex	AZ-KNF	4,334	3,679	0	Comp	NR	14	-10	0	2	0	0	50K	FS
* Woods Tank	AZ-CNF	786	---	0	Comp	7/23	0	---	0	0	0	0	20K	FS

**Southern Area (PL 2)**

New fires: 15  
 New large incidents: 1  
 Uncontained large fires: 1

\* **Chevron**, Mississippi Forestry Commission, DOF. Started on private land two miles west of Escatawpa, MS. Timber. Active fire behavior with creeping. Structures threatened.

Incident Name	Unit	Size		%	Ctn / Comp	Est	Personnel		Resources			Strc Lost	\$\$ CTD	Origin Own
		Acres	Chge				Total	Chge	Crews	Eng	Heli			
* Chevron	MS-MSS	1,306	---	95	Ctn	NR	9	---	0	1	0	0	4K	PRI

Active Incident Resource Summary						
GACC	Fires	Cumulative Acres	Crews	Engines	Helicopters	Total Personnel
AKCC	55	2,144,3200	72	16	25	2,097
NWCC	20	74,494	29	79	18	1,535
ONCC	0	0	0	0	0	0
OSCC	3	31,668	14	8	3	376
NRCC	11	13,371	17	26	6	598
GBCC	14	21,575	3	17	4	180
SWCC	5	42,975	3	3	0	94
RMCC	4	2	0	0	0	15
EACC	0	0	0	0	0	0
SACC	17	24,427	0	7	4	58
<b>Total</b>	<b>129</b>	<b>2,352,835</b>	<b>138</b>	<b>156</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>4,953</b>

**Fires and Acres Yesterday (by Protection):**

<b>Area</b>		<b>BIA</b>	<b>BLM</b>	<b>FWS</b>	<b>NPS</b>	<b>ST/OT</b>	<b>USFS</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>
Alaska Area	FIRES	0	3	0	0	1	0	<b>4</b>
	ACRES	0	252	0	0	0	0	<b>252</b>
Northwest Area	FIRES	0	0	0	0	10	4	<b>14</b>
	ACRES	0	0	0	0	2	0	<b>2</b>
Northern California Area	FIRES	1	0	0	0	22	2	<b>25</b>
	ACRES	0	0	0	0	5	0	<b>5</b>
Southern California Area	FIRES	1	0	0	0	18	2	<b>21</b>
	ACRES	7	0	0	0	14	1	<b>22</b>
Northern Rockies Area	FIRES	0	4	0	0	1	3	<b>8</b>
	ACRES	0	291	0	0	1	1	<b>293</b>
Great Basin Area	FIRES	0	2	0	1	3	5	<b>11</b>
	ACRES	0	16	0	0	106	0	<b>122</b>
Southwest Area	FIRES	3	0	0	0	1	5	<b>9</b>
	ACRES	1	0	0	0	0	1,696	<b>1,697</b>
Rocky Mountain Area	FIRES	0	9	0	0	3	1	<b>13</b>
	ACRES	0	16	0	0	0	11	<b>27</b>
Eastern Area	FIRES	0	0	0	0	0	1	<b>1</b>
	ACRES	0	0	0	0	0	0	<b>0</b>
Southern Area	FIRES	0	0	0	0	15	0	<b>15</b>
	ACRES	0	0	0	0	26	0	<b>26</b>
<b>TOTAL FIRES:</b>		<b>5</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>74</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>121</b>
<b>TOTAL ACRES:</b>		<b>8</b>	<b>575</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>154</b>	<b>1,709</b>	<b>2,446</b>

**Fires and Acres Year-to-Date (by Protection):**

<b>Area</b>		<b>BIA</b>	<b>BLM</b>	<b>FWS</b>	<b>NPS</b>	<b>ST/OT</b>	<b>USFS</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>
Alaska Area	FIRES	0	241	0	0	412	21	<b>674</b>
	ACRES	0	3,684,277	0	0	1,107,830	775	<b>4,792,882</b>
Northwest Area	FIRES	98	104	22	43	850	670	<b>1,787</b>
	ACRES	7,191	21,656	161	1,704	4,372	29,713	<b>64,797</b>
Northern California Area	FIRES	107	14	4	19	1,691	488	<b>2,323</b>
	ACRES	119	142	354	1	5,533	2,425	<b>8,574</b>
Southern California Area	FIRES	17	36	11	32	1,970	290	<b>2,356</b>
	ACRES	23	1,906	12	99	14,037	35,418	<b>51,495</b>
Northern Rockies Area	FIRES	705	39	2	5	618	330	<b>1,699</b>
	ACRES	4,596	8,572	564	4	64,248	5,788	<b>83,772</b>
Great Basin Area	FIRES	24	414	3	22	338	249	<b>1,050</b>
	ACRES	15	30,820	0	51	6,379	20,571	<b>57,836</b>
Southwest Area	FIRES	354	131	4	25	393	548	<b>1,455</b>
	ACRES	41,286	2,510	4	3,737	16,280	78,548	<b>142,365</b>
Rocky Mountain Area	FIRES	347	159	11	15	586	102	<b>1,220</b>
	ACRES	13,080	415	170	7,408	62,715	740	<b>84,528</b>
Eastern Area	FIRES	527	0	29	14	5,336	336	<b>6,242</b>
	ACRES	2,181	0	2,102	547	43,886	5,488	<b>54,204</b>
Southern Area	FIRES	284	0	11	13	13,195	239	<b>13,742</b>
	ACRES	35,503	0	2,093	188	157,675	12,534	<b>207,993</b>
<b>TOTAL FIRES:</b>		<b>2,463</b>	<b>1,138</b>	<b>97</b>	<b>188</b>	<b>25,389</b>	<b>3,273</b>	<b>32,548</b>
<b>TOTAL ACRES:</b>		<b>103,994</b>	<b>3,750,298</b>	<b>5,460</b>	<b>13,739</b>	<b>1,482,955</b>	<b>192,000</b>	<b>5,548,446</b>

<b>Ten Year Average Fires (2005 – 2014 as of today)</b>	<b>41,458</b>
<b>Ten Year Average Acres (2005 – 2014 as of today)</b>	<b>3,136,697</b>

**Prescribed Fires and Acres Yesterday (by Ownership):**

<b>Area</b>		<b>BIA</b>	<b>BLM</b>	<b>FWS</b>	<b>NPS</b>	<b>ST/OT</b>	<b>USFS</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>
Alaska Area	FIRES	0	0	0	0	0	0	<b>0</b>
	ACRES	0	0	0	0	0	0	<b>0</b>
Northwest Area	FIRES	0	0	0	0	0	0	<b>0</b>
	ACRES	0	0	0	0	0	0	<b>0</b>
Northern California Area	FIRES	0	0	0	0	0	0	<b>0</b>
	ACRES	0	0	0	0	0	0	<b>0</b>
Southern California Area	FIRES	0	0	0	0	0	0	<b>0</b>
	ACRES	0	0	0	0	0	0	<b>0</b>
Northern Rockies Area	FIRES	0	0	0	0	0	0	<b>0</b>
	ACRES	0	0	0	0	0	0	<b>0</b>
Great Basin Area	FIRES	0	0	0	0	0	0	<b>0</b>
	ACRES	0	0	0	0	0	0	<b>0</b>
Southwest Area	FIRES	0	0	0	0	0	1	<b>1</b>
	ACRES	0	0	0	0	0	98	<b>98</b>
Rocky Mountain Area	FIRES	0	0	0	0	0	0	<b>0</b>
	ACRES	0	0	0	0	0	0	<b>0</b>
Eastern Area	FIRES	0	0	1	0	0	1	<b>2</b>
	ACRES	0	0	5	0	0	260	<b>265</b>
Southern Area	FIRES	0	0	0	0	15	0	<b>15</b>
	ACRES	0	0	0	0	178	0	<b>178</b>
<b>TOTAL FIRES:</b>		<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>TOTAL ACRES:</b>		<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>178</b>	<b>358</b>	<b>541</b>

**Prescribed Fires and Acres Year-to-Date (by Ownership):**

<b>Area</b>		<b>BIA</b>	<b>BLM</b>	<b>FWS</b>	<b>NPS</b>	<b>ST/OT</b>	<b>USFS</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>
Alaska Area	FIRES	0	5	0	0	2	0	<b>7</b>
	ACRES	0	3,965	0	0	988	0	<b>4,953</b>
Northwest Area	FIRES	7	28	3	2	0	147	<b>187</b>
	ACRES	2,457	17,778	51	49	0	23,534	<b>43,869</b>
Northern California Area	FIRES	0	0	12	11	0	113	<b>136</b>
	ACRES	0	143	5,173	190	0	7,734	<b>13,240</b>
Southern California Area	FIRES	0	3	4	2	0	100	<b>109</b>
	ACRES	0	78	495	83	0	1,860	<b>2,516</b>
Northern Rockies Area	FIRES	10	31	28	4	5	118	<b>196</b>
	ACRES	3,651	10,580	12,835	1,590	728	17,735	<b>47,119</b>
Great Basin Area	FIRES	1	24	1	6	31	50	<b>113</b>
	ACRES	24	1,449	1,060	85	1,713	17,315	<b>21,646</b>
Southwest Area	FIRES	14	20	8	7	0	126	<b>175</b>
	ACRES	588	18,879	2,436	4,606	0	72,385	<b>98,894</b>
Rocky Mountain Area	FIRES	17	34	57	11	47	80	<b>246</b>
	ACRES	2,075	6,299	15,899	1,153	2,132	22,351	<b>49,909</b>
Eastern Area	FIRES	30	0	256	22	1,371	154	<b>1,833</b>
	ACRES	39,398	0	32,913	6,637	65,420	49,377	<b>193,745</b>
Southern Area	FIRES	85	0	140	11	7,827	694	<b>8,757</b>
	ACRES	16,313	0	111,438	14,261	488,618	608,995	<b>1,239,625</b>
<b>TOTAL FIRES:</b>		<b>164</b>	<b>145</b>	<b>509</b>	<b>76</b>	<b>9,283</b>	<b>1,582</b>	<b>11,759</b>
<b>TOTAL ACRES:</b>		<b>64,506</b>	<b>59,171</b>	<b>182,300</b>	<b>28,654</b>	<b>559,599</b>	<b>821,286</b>	<b>1,715,516</b>

\*\*\* Changes in some agency YTD acres reflect more accurate mapping or reporting adjustments. \*\*\*

Additional wildfire information is available through the Geographic Areas at <http://gacc.nifc.gov/>

## Canada Fires and Hectares

PROVINCES	FIRES YESTERDAY	HECTARES YESTERDAY	FIRES YEAR-TO-DATE	HECTARES YEAR-TO-DATE
BRITISH COLUMBIA	11	716	1,104	293,481
YUKON TERRITORY	1	2,700	180	176,700
ALBERTA	18	4,696	1,440	490,536
NORTHWEST TERRITORY	1	18,468	204	475,418
SASKATCHEWAN	3	116,675	630	1,304,065
MANITOBA	1	0	350	40,552
ONTARIO	8	163	390	35,688
QUEBEC	2	0	308	4,975
NEWFOUNDLAND	0	0	107	6,269
NEW BRUNSWICK	1	0	185	256
NOVA SCOTIA	0	0	214	495
PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND	0	0	4	2
NATIONAL PARKS	0	300	92	506,116
TOTALS	46	143,719	5,208	3,334,552

\* 1 Hectare = 2.47 Acres

**Predictive Services Discussion:** Dry southwest winds will develop today in the Great Basin between a trough of low pressure in Idaho and a ridge of high pressure over Texas. It will also be breezy in the Pacific Northwest and northern Rockies, especially where complex terrain accelerates the winds near the Columbia Gorge. Isolated showers and thunderstorms are expected along Montana's Canadian border as a closed low pressure system moves east. Monsoon moisture in the Southwest will deliver showers and thunderstorms to the mountains of eastern Arizona. Meanwhile, a frontal band will be a focus for showers and thunderstorms on the central Plains this afternoon.

<http://www.predictiveservices.nifc.gov/outlooks/outlooks.htm>

This report contains information derived from the National Fire and Aviation Management Web Applications (FAMWEB) system and other sources to provide relative information about emerging and ongoing incident activity. This information is considered operational in nature, is subject to change, and therefore may not match official year-to-date agency records.

**\*\* National Interagency Coordination Center \*\***



This Day in History is a brief summary of a powerful learning opportunity and is not intended to second guess or be judgmental of decisions and actions. Put yourself in the following situation as if you do not know what the outcome will be. What are the conditions? What are you thinking? What are YOU doing?

## Battlement Creek Fire, Colorado – July 17<sup>th</sup>, 1976

It's 1976 and western Colorado is experiencing an unusually severe fire season caused partly by unusual fuel conditions and heavy lightning activity during dry weather. A severe frost in June kills a high percentage of the leaves on Gambel oak which remain on the branches and is considered one of Colorado's most flammable fuels. 10 hour fuels are at 3-5%. A large scale high pressure weather pattern sits over western Colorado allowing for local weather to be influenced by terrain and diurnal winds averaging 10-15 mph in the afternoon with higher gusts. The weather is fair and hot with the temperatures at Grand Junction and Rifle reaching into the mid and upper 90's. A fire is reported 40 miles northeast of Grand Junction, in the Battlement Creek drainage. The fire is burning over an elevation range of 6200-8400 ft on a steep west-facing slope.

Friday July 16, 0630, two hotshot crews from the Coconino NF Arizona arrive at the Battlement Creek fire. This is the seventeenth fire of the first season for the newly formed Mormon Lake Hotshot Crew. The strategy is to prevent western and southern spread. The crews begin a major burnout of the catline (dozer line) from the rocky bluffs (Point A) at about 1615, downhill along the catline toward the Battlement Creek road at the bottom (Point C) ending about 2030. The fire makes an uphill run in oak brush burning out a large portion of the drainage (from the road east to the ridge top) in about 20 minutes. Two "impressive" fire whirls are observed between 1600-1700. The night shift continues the burn out (Point C-D and beyond along the road) but is spotty with considerable unburned fuel remaining. Other night shift crews construct line along the ridge top (Point E to G). Based on Friday's fire behavior, the E-G line is a crucial spot on the fire. Saturday July 17<sup>th</sup>, 0700, at morning briefing the Mormon Lake crew is assigned to burn out this section of line.

**Saturday morning, July 17<sup>th</sup>** - Due to a delay with the helicopter, the Mormon Lake crew does not get to the base of the rock bluff (Point E) until 1100. They are instructed to improve and burn out the line from the rocky bluff to the helispot (Point E-G). The burnout squad consisted of the crew boss, squad boss and 2 crewmembers. The rest of the crew is improving the handline down the ridge top.

At this same time another crew is burning out in the bottom of the draw (Point C-D). The draw burns readily, uphill toward the ridge and the Mormon Lake crew. Neither crew knew of the specific location or assignment of the other.

**1400** - 1/3 the way from the rock bluff to the upper helispot, there is a noticeable increase in smoke from the draw below (where the other crew had been burning). The crew boss is instructed to speed up the line improvement squad on toward the safety zone (Point G) and to narrow down and speed up his burnout on down the ridgeline to join the remainder of the crew in the safety zone when his burnout was done. Upslope winds have increased to 25-35 mph.

**1425-1440** – The line improvement squad just makes it into the safety zone when the flame front hits the ridge. 200 yards back, the burnout squad radios that they are "trapped". Their escape is blocked by heavy smoke and flames.

**1440 – 1445** – The squad removes their canvas vests to cover their head and face, moistened the vests and their clothes with water from their canteens, and lays face down in the mineral soil of the fireline.

**1448** – All four firefighters are very badly burned. Three will lose their lives

### Discussion Points

The crew all wore aluminum hardhats, canvas vests, Nomex shirts and non-fire-resistant work pants. Fire shelters were not used. Fire shelters may have prevented serious burns and death at this incident. Policy on issuing and carrying shelters had not been established yet. This incident became the catalyst for the mandatory use of fire shelters and fire resistant clothing.

- **Action Item:** Take this opportunity to inspect, repair or replace your PPE and fire shelter if needed to ensure that it protects you as well as possible



