

Fire - Thompson Creek Fire - White River N.F. (Central Zone GJ Dist)

Injured jumper is Matt Alexander - Redding Smokejumpers (USFS)

Approximate date and time injury occurred - 9-5-02 at ~ 1700.

Nature of the injury - Mid-shaft Femur break.

Aircraft - BLM Twin Otter Jumper - 44

Jump load Configuration - 6 USFS + 2 BLM.

Spotters - Dave Vining (BLM) and Jerry Spence (USFS)

Narrative:

On September 5, 2002, at approximately 1700, a mixed load of Boise BLM and Redding USFS smokejumpers was reinforcing another load of jumpers on the Thompson Creek Fire - White River N.F. The jump spot selected by the round spotter was 1-2 acre meadow in an aspen patch. The spotters reported that the air was smooth and the spot looked good. Adjacent to the selected spot were openings in the trees that could be used as alternate spots if needed. The drift indicated by the first set of streamers was ~ 400 yards. Two check sets of streamers were thrown: both landed approximately 50 yards downwind of the spot, on a small ridge. The spotters decided to drop the entire load of jumpers, the six USFS followed by the two BLM. The first two jumpers radioed the plane from the ground and said everything was O.K., that there was a little down air, but that the landings were acceptable. The second and third sticks exited the plane, the spotters switched positions, and the plane started to climb to throw the BLM jumpers. Matt Alexander's jump partner did not make the spot but Matt landed in the middle of the meadow. As the plane climbed to 3000' AGL, the jumpers on the ground radioed to say a jumper was injured and that they needed the EMT kit. The EMT kit was kicked, Life-Flight was ordered, and the plane climbed to 3000' for the BLM stick. The BLM jumpers landed on the ridgeline where the checksets landed. The spotters kicked cargo to the jumpers, then exited the area to return to Grand Junction. Air Attack coordinated the medivac.. Alexander was medivaced to St Mary's Hospital in Grand Junction.