



USDA Forest Service Fire and Aviation Management Briefing Paper



Date: February 4, 2003

Topic: Columbia Support

Issue: USFS support to Columbia clean-up effort.

Background: Saturday morning February 2, 2003 the shuttle Columbia was lost in flight over Texas and Louisiana.

Key Points:

The debris field from the space shuttle is in part on the National Forests and Grasslands in Texas and the Kisatchie National Forest in Louisiana.

FEMA is the overall lead agency. FBI is the lead agency for collection of human remains and miscellaneous debris. EPA is the lead agency for debris, decontamination, and collection. The Texas Forest Service is the lead state agency, providing planning and logistical support to federal operations. NASA is the lead agency in information and intelligence. Numerous other federal agencies are on the scene providing assistance to three federal lead agencies. The Salvation Army is providing meals and rehab to all responders.

The Southern Area has committed the following resources to locate, plot and protect debris as of February 3, 2003:

- (2) Videography aircraft and staff to provide aerial photographs
- (6) GIS Technicians
- Approximately 100 personnel (total) from the National Forests and Grasslands in Texas and the Kisatchie National Forest (includes LEI)
- (1) Type III Helicopter
- (14) GPS units
- (9) ATVs

Nationally FEMA has not activated ESF-4 (USFS). The Southern Area has received a mission assignment from FEMA for GIS support. Texas State Forest Service has requested assistance from USFS for personnel to locate and secure debris. All USFS personnel are working in Texas, none are committed on the Kisatchie NF in Louisiana.

Current Cooperating Agencies include: FBI, NASA, US Marshall's Office, Texas DPS, ATF, EPA, Texas Department of Transportation, Red Cross, Texas Army National Guard, Department of Defense, US Coast Guard, FEMA, DEMORT and the Salvation Army.

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