



National Aviation Safety Center
USDA Forest Service
National Interagency Fire Center
Boise, ID

Preliminary Mishap Notification

THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION IS PRELIMINARY AND SUBJECT TO CHANGE

Date/Time: 7/21/2009 approximately 1015 PDT

Unit: Six Rivers NF

Location: Willows Helibase

Aircraft: Bell 212

Mission: Rappel Proficiency

Injuries: 1 Fatal

Damage: None to aircraft

Narrative: The helicopter and crew were assigned to the Backbone incident and were engaging in a proficiency rappel when a rappeller fell. An Accident investigation team is being mobilized at this time. Region 5 has suspended all rappel activities within the region at this time. Nationally there is not a stand down; however, all rappel units are advised to double check their equipment and review procedures immediately.

Team:
Team Leader – Tom Wagner
Team Leader (T) – Paul Brewster
Air Safety Investigator – Gary Morgan
Air Safety Investigator (T) & Helicopter Program Specialist – Jami Anzalone
NTSB Air Safety Investigator – Dennis Hogenson
Fire Operations Specialist – Gary Brown
Scribe – Lori Clark
Union Representative: TBA

Liaison: National Helicopter Operations Program Specialist - Vince Welbaum



NEWS RELEASE

U.S. Forest Service • National Incident Management Organization – Atlanta

Klamath National Forest

1312 Fairlane Road, Yreka, CA 96097 • Voice (530) 842-6131 • Web: www.fs.fed.us/r5/klamath

Shasta-Trinity National Forest

3644 Avtech Parkway, Redding, CA 96002 • Voice (530) 226-2500 • Web: www.fs.fed.us/r5/shastatrinity

Six Rivers National Forest

1330 Bayshore Way, Eureka, CA 95501 • Voice (707) 442-1721 • Web: www.fs.fed.us/r5/sixrivers

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July 18, 2009

Fire Information: 530-629-2816

Email: backbone.fire.info@gmail.com

www.inciweb.org/incident/1716/

Fatal Accident During Routine Training At the Backbone Helibase

WILLOW CREEK, Calif. – During a routine training exercise an individual was involved in an accident Tuesday morning. A Helicopter and its crew, who are assigned to the Backbone Fire, was conducting weekly skill proficiency acceptance training and was involved in an accident that took an individuals life.

At 10:10 this morning while performing a proficiency skill acceptance training, at the Backbone Helibase in Willow Creek, an individual fell and incurred fatal injuries. The training is required to be conducted weekly to insure the crew's safety and proficiency.

Information is limited at this time and all names of individuals involved are being with held until notifications to families have been made. We will be happy to provide information as soon as it is available.

The individual was provided medical attention immediately at the scene. The Base medical staff, the Humboldt County Coroner's Office, and the Humboldt County Sherriff's Office were dispatched and involved in the initial response.

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