

I.A.P.
Version

Rapid Lesson Sharing

Event Type: Spot Fire from Dozer Track

Date: July 5, 2018

Location: Klamathon Fire, Klamath National Forest

“Always take the time to get off the dozer, engine or whatever your busy “high-horse” may be, and make introductions.”

What Happened?

A spot fire started from grouser contact with rock substrate.

From the Dozer Operator:

I had just gotten off the dozer and introduced myself to the Captain of Trinity River 4. I asked him if he could scout a way through the rocks so I could get up to the main ridge and start punching a line toward one of the many heads of this stiffly wind-driven fire.

As I was attempting to chisel a meager “hand line” with the short side corner bit through the rocks, I noticed a reflection of fire in a window that did not reflect where the main fire should have been. I immediately turned around to see a fire in wild oats/cheat grass approximately 10 feet by 10 feet in size. Before I could turn the dozer around, the 20-30 mph wind violently blew the fire upslope and into the surrounding stand of decadent blue brush—which immediately started torching out and spreading fire uphill toward my Line Scout.

I immediately called my Scout on Tac7 as “Trinity River 3” to warn him of the developing situation. There was no response from the scout. I called again to no avail and was able to turn around and make another attempt at slowing the fire down—knowing that there was no way that I was going to stop it. My only hope was to slow the fire down until I could contact my Scout.

On my third attempt to contact my Scout, I used his first name. To my relief, the use of his first name on the tactical channel finally got his attention. I noticed that he turned around and saw the fire coming toward his position. He immediately began making his way back down the ridge.

What I Learned

- ❖ When it becomes evident that it is handcrew country, back off and admit it. It’s okay, the crew will forgive you.
- ❖ Don't allow large numbers of folks to work “downwind or upslope” of your activity in rocks. If the entire crew had been upslope of me and it was a purely grass fuel-type, this could've ended very badly.
- ❖ Always take the time to get off the dozer/engine/whatever your busy “high-horse” may be and make introductions.
- ❖ Memorize the names of key folks you are working with, it could save a life!

This RLS was submitted by: Jason Murieen – Dozer Operator

Related to Making Introductions...

Review this 2015 issue of Two More Chains

This issue explores the US and THEM mindset. It explains how and why we should do away with “Us” and “Them” and use “We”. Ground Truths covers why we need to “Be Nice” on the fireline.

<https://www.wildfirelessons.net/viewdocument/two-more-chains-summer-2015>

