

Lone Peak Conservation Center

Twin
Peaks
2014
Season
Report

Season of IA

Twin Peaks

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2014 FIRE SEASON

OVERVIEW

The 2014 fire season was a great season for the Twin Peaks Crew. From beginning to end the crew had many opportunities for training and growth, both individually and as a crew. The crew prepared for what was expected to be a tough season jam-packed with full tours back to back, but what they got, in fact, was a more mellow season that turned out to be average compared to seasons past. Twin Peaks fought fires in 4 different states and 3 different regions. The crew also did several fuel mitigation projects all around the state throughout the season to help protect both state and federal lands from future catastrophic fires. Twin Peaks strives to maintain a high level of professionalism and work ethic, staying on task and getting the job done safely and effectively. Physical fitness has always been a priority of the crew to maintain the reputation of being one of the best Type 21A crews in the nation, constantly turning heads and raising eyebrows with the quantity and quality of the work they produce. The Twin Peaks crew knew they were physically and mentally prepared before the season started.

2014 Season

Begins

Twin peaks seasonal employees started on April 28th and went right in to our “HELL WEEK” training. The rookies started off in S-212 chainsaw training hosted by the Twin Peaks Crew as well as other organizations at the Lone Peak Conservation Center. Returnees began by attending the annual refresher and other critical training classes. Along with classroom training, the first week was filled with grueling PT sessions facilitated by Lyle Jennings, Twin Peaks Crew Boss.



THOR!!

The second week of training this year is where the crew really tested their physical and mental capacity to see if they were, in fact, up for the challenges that lay ahead. Instead of the traditional mock fire scenarios out in the West Desert of Utah, the crew leadership chose a different path. They opted for a journey through the northern Utah forest that would combine long hikes, heavy packs and plenty of training. Lyle chose the Mueller Park area for this endeavor, starting the day off with gear checks and helicopter protocols. Once the crew was lined out on the do's and don'ts of how they were to operate, they began the first leg of their journey, a 7.6 mile hike up the Mueller trail with each person carrying enough food and gear for a three day stay in the woods. Each

squad packed a full cubetainer to supplement their water supply. Once the crew reached the top and had a chance to catch their breath, the training scenarios began.



Twin Peaks hiking up the Mueller Trail

They did everything from taking weather observations to fire size-ups and medical scenarios, all of which proved helpful preparation for the season. Each day brought a new physical challenge with long hikes or grueling PT sessions of power yoga. After the journey was complete the leadership felt the crew was ready for the season.



Yoga PT top of Mueller (Rudy Flats)

After passing their base review on May, 17th the crew soon received their first fire call to southern California, for Twin Peaks the season was looking like a big one. Unfortunately, it was cancelled in route and they headed back home.

The next few weeks proved to be very valuable as the crew completed high priority projects as part of Governor Herbert's Catastrophic Wildfire Reduction Strategy in the Park City and Argyle Canyon areas. The crew was recognized by local residents for doing an outstanding job in the Moose Hollow community.

As mid-June came around Twin Peaks was assigned to the Cold Springs RX on the western portion of the Book Cliffs known as the Tavaputs Plateau. It was part of a multi-year burn plan that had been in place for the last 4 years which included several units and several thousand acres. The ignition would be done by heli-torch and minimal hand lighting. The first day of ignition was unsuccessful because relative humidity was too high, the following days became increasingly more active and the fire did exactly what they were hoping for. The crew was part of the holding division and held their ground while containing and mopping up any and all spot fires. With the ignition portion of the RX complete, weather was coming in and the Burn Boss decided that he needed to have the west flank secured with direct hand line from the bottom of the drainage to the top of the mountain. Twin Peaks constructed 1.5 miles of direct line through thick dead and down timber and up steep slopes all with a smile on their faces. "All in a day's work", said Crew Boss



Holding on the Cold Springs RX

July 1, 2014 brought Twin Peaks first wild land fire of the season. The crew was requested to respond to Utah's west desert just south of Dugway Proving Grounds. The Black Crook Creek fire was an emerging incident, as the crew arrived they were tasked with building direct fire line on the west flank to support a local helicopter module. Working well into the wee hours of the night they were able to stop the progression of the fire on their piece of ground. It was a short lived incident only lasting 3 shifts, and then it was back on project work and being on call. The rest of July proved to be eventful, hitting 2 more fires in the Utah area.

Twin peaks was back at it with a dispatch to southern Idaho following a week of project work. The Ibex fire was relatively small and inactive, so much that the crew was able to quickly mop up and contain it in only a few shifts.

Night Operations on Black Crook Creek fire

With fire season ramping up, the region was short on resources, so Twin Peaks was put on a preposition code and held in place at Twin Falls Idaho. After staging just one day, a new fire broke out on the Caribou-Targhee National Forest near Caribou City. Twin Peaks arrived in the early afternoon, was quickly briefed and on the fire that day. The fire was 20-25 acres and forest management decided this would be a Resource Benefit fire. This particular forest does not see a lot of fire and was in need of a good low intensity burn. The crew was tasked with structure protection and prepped around a 100



year old mining cabin out ahead of the fire's possible path. The crew was to build a saw swath 300 feet around the cabin and install an elaborate sprinkle system utilizing 3 mark3 pumps. Once the work was done rain moved in and the crew's immediate presence was no longer needed. There were other fires breaking out in the area caused by back to back lightning bursts that came through Southern Idaho. Twin Peaks was ok with moving on since the mosquitos were something fierce!



Mosquito net up!!

The Flat Iron fire was a typical desert fire. It was active the first day, and then died out with the wind and the crew had it wrapped up in only one day. That night more lightning came through and sparked the East Bob Smith fire

(the crew's favorite fire of the year).



Flight to East Bob Smith

Although the fire was not large in size (about 25 acres) it gave everyone on Twin Peaks a chance to step up and move into different positions for training purposes. This fire challenged the crew in many aspects, as primary overhead were put into other roles. Crewmembers were able to do quality Helicopter crewmember, Crew boss, and Squad boss training. Crewmembers less experienced with helicopter operations were trained up with success. It also gave the crew its first and only spike out of the year. Twin Peaks enjoyed their time on the fire as they were able to see it from start to finish and successfully conquer it. The East Bob Smith fire challenged Twin Peaks physically, mentally and organizationally.



Felling operations on East Bob Smith

After some much needed R&R Twin Peaks was assigned to the 2014 Lolo preposition. As they headed to Montana they were routed to the Superior district of the Lolo National Forest. After tying in with the local forest supervisor and shown the area, Twin Peaks set out for project work and to be IA (Initial Attack) ready. After some grueling project days, their first IA was in full swing. Twin Peaks was split in two modules, splitting one squad in half to combine with the others. The Tarkio fire was short lived and very small, it was put out with a day's worth of work. Two days later the Boyd Mountain fire showed its face from a lightning hold over. This time the entire crew got in place, and after a hasty briefing, Twin Peaks sprang into action. Hiking old over grown logging roads to the fire with hard work and quick action they had lined the fire in only 30 minutes, saving the forest from what could have been a massive fire!

Twin Peaks third and final fire for the Montana roll was the West Alder fire. This fire in particular was very challenging both physically and mentally. The call came late in the day and as Twin Peaks mobilized to the fire, little information was known of the incident. The first day's shift on the West Alder gave the Twin Peaks crew an incident within an incident. The fire was located mid slope on steep and very rocky terrain. A large diameter log came loose and rolled towards a saw team; as they escaped the area, large rocks ricocheted off the log and struck the sawyer, rendering him unconscious. After a successful hoist operation and getting the patient to the hospital he was cleared and returned to the hill a few shifts later.



The Hoist



Patient Assessment

Twin Peaks was able to learn numerous lessons from the incident:

- Preseason training at Mueller Park for medical scenarios proved invaluable in this situation.
- There needs to be medical control for all active line paramedics, regardless of agency. Sometimes a less aggressive approach and thinking big box is the best, safest approach.

The local forest supervisors commended Twin Peaks on their proficiency and professionalism during the event. After the Montana roll, and all that had happened, the crew took an extra day off-call to let the guys catch their breath and relax, for the season was yet to be over. Twin Peaks did not get immediately launched back out. This particular season had several pulses where a lot of orders came through at the same time, so it was back to project work up at the Powder Mountain Resort. For two weeks Twin Peaks labored, putting in a large fuel break along a road, clearing out the dead standing snags and dead fuel on the ground, building piles as they went.

Northern California was the crew's next destination, they were sent to the Tahoe National Forest. They arrived and were briefed, shown the area, and then sent to White Cloud Work Center staging for IA. The first few days proved valuable with crew PT's and project work that was done for the local forest. With fire danger nearing extreme levels, Twin Peaks was sure they would bust a fire. And so it

happened, their first northern California fire was a small one reported by a logging company deep in the woods. Twin Peaks hiked into the fire finding at the bottom of drainage, what appeared to be a human caused fire, since no lighting had been reported in some time. After quickly putting the Huysink fire to bed they were back on staging.



Crew on the Huysink fire

Twin Peaks responded to another Initial Attack fire in the area, the Walker Mill fire which was about 12 acres. It had a lot of resources on it and was easily contained.

Southern California was heating up with record temps and fires breaking out, Twin Peaks got relocated to the Los Padres District, Los Padres N.F., near Santa Barbara for the remainder of their tour. The crew had one fire call, but were cancelled en route. They were able to enjoy their time in the southern California area with lots of PT'S and time to work on crew cohesion and training.

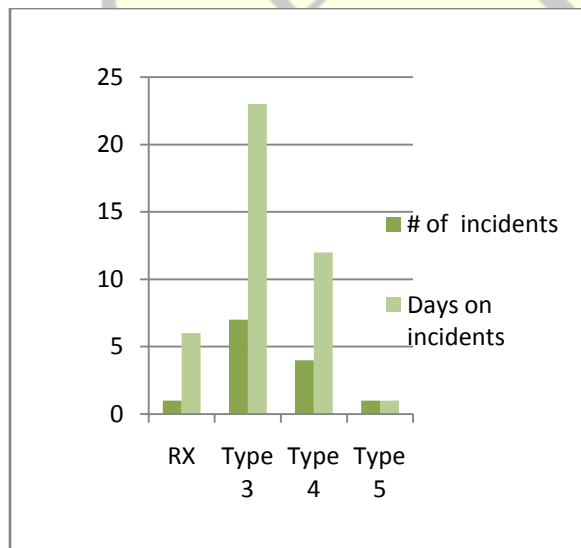
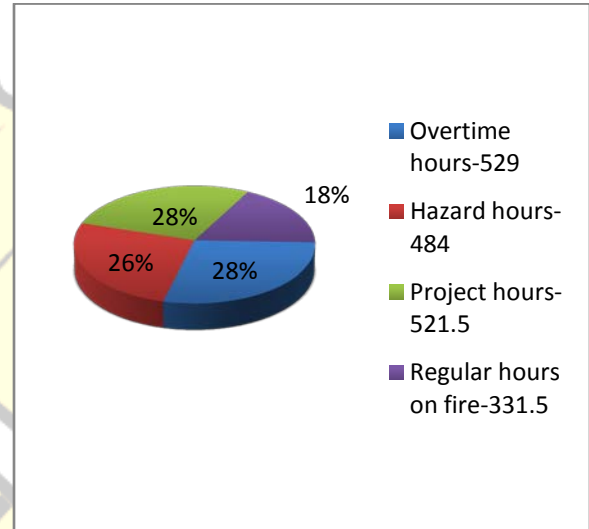
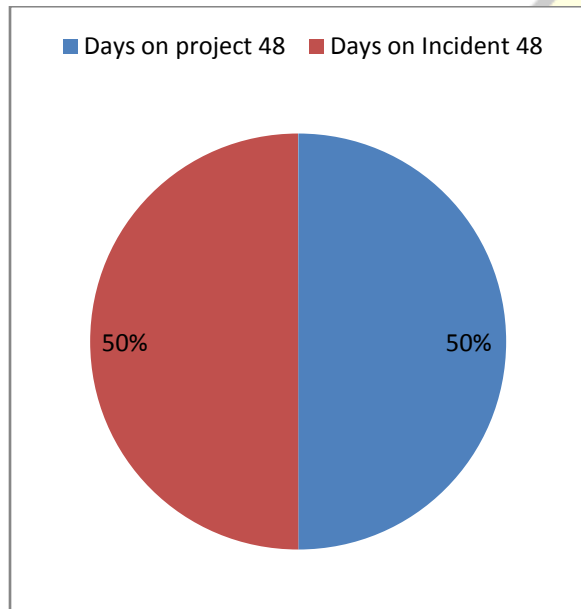
The remainder of the 2014 TwinPeaks fire season was filled with project work around the State of Utah. Burning piles in the high Uintahs was a highlight of the later season effort, work all crewmembers enjoy. The last project of the season was near Blanding Utah, cutting and piling a fuel break along Forest Service and BLM

borders. Twin Peaks had a chance to burn piles as they went, an out of the ordinary occurrence, as piles are generally left to cure for a season or two before burning.

All in all Twin Peaks had a successful, and enjoyable season. As all seasons go, it had its ebb and flow and though it was rough, Twin Peaks continued to be a strong, cohesive unit that never wavered. They learned valuable lessons and grew from the hardships faced and overcome. Twin Peaks looks forward to the 2015 season and all the challenges it will bring.

Twin Peaks

Hours summary



Peaks