



2015 Season Report

Prepared By: Ted Sneed

Twin Peaks I.A. Fire Crew
State of Utah ◆ Division of Forestry, Fire, and State Lands
271 West Bitterbrush Lane ◆ Draper, UT 84020

FIRE SEASON OVERVIEW

The 2015 fire season was an exciting time for the Twin Peaks crew. The season was comprised of numerous wildfires within six different states. The season also had intermittent opportunities to serve the State of Utah in its Catastrophic Wildfire Reduction Strategies through fuels mitigations projects and a Type 1 Rx burn. The crew fought fires in Arizona, Utah and Idaho as a whole and reached California, Washington and Oregon through individual wildland fire training-assignments. The crew experienced a great deal of change and advancement throughout the entire season, with training opportunities on every assignment. Every fire assignment presented an opportunity for the members of Twin Peaks to grow through experience and individual development. The crew began its season in May under the leadership of Lyle Jennings, and then near the end of June Lyle handed the crew off to Austin Wilson who maintained control of the crew until the end of August. The changing of key leadership was the start of many opportunities for advancement within Twin Peaks.



HIRING AND CRITICAL

TRAINING

Twin Peaks has a very high standard for its applicants in order to sustain a top-notch crew that strives to maintain its reputation as one of the best Type 2 IA crews in the nation. We received over one hundred applicants this year for five open positions. For those that did not receive a position with Twin Peaks, fourteen were hired on with Dromedary Peak fuels crew, which is known for applying the same standards of excellence as Twin Peaks, Alta IHC and Lone Peak IHC. As the crew assembled, Twin Peaks began its 80 hours of critical training, which consisted



Medical Training Scenario, Orson Smith Trail
Draper, UT

classroom lectures, hands on training, PT and field exercises. The training covered all areas that the crew is expected to perform in, with strong emphases on hands on training. The cornerstone of Twin Peaks critical training are the field exercises that engage the crew in a multitude of facets such as teamwork, chainsaw operations, emergency medical scenarios, ICT5 scenarios and fireline operations.

2015 SEASON BEGINS

The crew became available for national dispatch on May 14th making Twin Peaks one of the first Type 2 IA crews to go available in the Great Basin for 2015. The season started with project work overlooking the Pineview Reservoir, completing a fuel break for a WUI community and giving the crew a chance to hone in their

skills with a chainsaw. The crew continued project work for WUI communities until the 15th of June, when they were pre-scheduled to dispatch to the Cold Springs Rx burn. The Cold Springs Rx is the one of the largest prescribed burns in Utah and has been an ongoing process for several years. This year the burn was able to come into a state of completion, thanks to the hard work and cooperation of many different interagency resources. Twin Peaks was assigned to prep and burn the most complex areas of the burn unit, areas that the Helitorch was unable to access. Twin Peaks spent a total of 9 days on the Cold Springs RX. Immediately after being released from the Rx burn the crew received a fire call to Flaming Gorge, Utah for the



Critical Training Backpacking Trip

Mueller Park, UT



Cold Springs Rx
Tavaputs Ranch, UT

Memorial Fire. The fire consisted of mixed desert fuels and Ponderosa Pine forest. The fire backed right up against the shoreline of Flaming Gorge Reservoir. During the mop-up stage of the fire, several large old growth hazard trees were discovered and the decision was made to employ an old standby method for maintaining firefighter safety in hazard tree situations, explosives! A strategy rarely used in today's wildland tactics, which proved to be a memorable experience. Crewmembers were able to not only see, but feel the shock wave of the blasting (pentaerythritol tetranitrate, i.e. detonation cord) from roughly one-thousand feet away.

The Mount Emma Fire

After being released from the Memorial fire and returning home, Lyle Jennings, the crew's official crew boss, transferred command of Twin Peaks to Austin Wilson. Lyle's departure from the crew was to work as a single resource task force leader and the Lone Peak duty officer. The crew was quickly called up to the Arizona Strip district in response to the Mount Emma fire. The fire was caused by lightning in a remote area just a few miles northwest of the Grand Canyon. With relatively few homes nearby the decision was made by the Incident Management Team (IMT) to manage the fire and prep for a long-term plan. The crew was



Austin McBride Securing The Line
The Memorial Fire
Flaming Gorge UT

given the task of preparing several miles of road for a burn. Each day the crew completed more work than the IMT had anticipated and the team quickly ran out of work for the crew to accomplish. With the fire in check for the time being and dry lightning passing through the area, the crew was put up for initial attack (I.A.) reassignment. While the crew waited for an I.A. the Twin Peaks leadership used the time to PT and do some proficiency training with the crew over the next few days. As a storm approached the fire's area, the demobilization process was put into action as the IMT prepared for more than an inch of rain. While Austin Wilson prepared the crew for demobilization, the IMT looked for opportunities to reassign the crew at a nearby fire.

The Berry Fire

The crew drove directly from the Mount Emma fire to the Berry fire near Vernal Utah. Arriving late at night the crew bedded down and prepared to hit the fire hard the next morning. After being briefed, the crew headed up to the fire through a steep old growth Pinyon/Juniper forest. The first shift proved to be exciting and challenging. The crew secured an anchor point and proceeded with direct handline on the fire's edge, while scouts worked a helicopter configured for bucket drops ahead of the crew. While the fire progressed, crewmembers were given opportunities to gain experience. The

leadership team of Twin Peaks gave various assignments to those they thought could handle the challenges of directing fireline operations around suspected spot fires while guiding the helicopter on scene as needed. All in all the Berry fire proved to be a great place to spend the 4th of July.

The High Meadow fire

After being released from the Berry fire, Twin Peaks spent a few days resting and a couple of weeks providing urban communities with fuels mitigation work. But soon a dispatch back to the Arizona Strip was in hand. The crew headed back to the same geographical area of the Mount Emma fire, just 1.5 miles to the west. With similar values at risk, the tactics stayed the same and the crew prepared a new section of road and trails for a burn operation. This time Ted Sneed the Alpha Squad Leader was given an opportunity to lead the crew in order to work on his Crew Boss task book. With the fire pushing ever closer to the proposed indirect handline the crew remained diligent and persevered while staying ahead of the advancing fire. After 5 days of hard work, the situation appeared to be all too similar to Twin Peaks first visit to the Arizona Strip District, with a severe weather warning for rain showers approaching the crew was released from the incident.



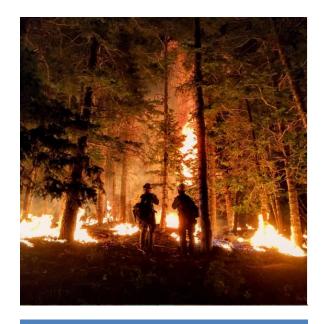
Midnight Ignition Operations
The Solitude Fire,
Fishlake National Forest, UT

MID-SEASON

The Solitude Fire

With just one week of project work in between fires, the crew set off to the Fishlake National Forest in Central Utah. The Solitude fire was less than 100 acres when the crew arrived. This time it was Dan Walton's (Charlie Squad Leader) turn to lead the crew for a task book training assignment. The forest ranger chose to let the fire proceed with its natural intentions and to have firefighters corral it in a large box set within some of the forests natural boundaries. With a plan in place, the crews began preparing for a large-scale burn operation, covering several miles of roads and ridges. Twin Peaks

worked several days preparing the fuels to be ready to burn, so that firefighters could stand back and let fire do what it does best, burn. Once the conditions were right to burn and the other resources finished their section of ground to prep, the burn commenced. Firing operations did not start until late afternoon around 1800 hours. Dan Walton was assigned by the IMT to lead the holding operations, which encompassed several engines and the Twin Peaks crew. The burn went off without a hitch, sending 180-foot high flames rolling through the sky, directly back into the burn area. The burn progressed throughout the evening until about midnight when the crews hung the burn up until the following shift. By late morning,



Holding Operations
The Solitude Fire
Fishlake National Forest, UT

resources were lining out for another night of burning. The second section was predicted to be a more challenging piece of terrain, as it included several areas of heavy fuel loading, steep terrain and corner pieces that were sure to ignite with intensity. As night fell, the air temperature dropped and the burn continued, keeping firefighters warm from the flame front spanning across the horizon. The crew's spirits remained high throughout the shift as they enjoyed the fruits of their labor, a full moon's night of scattered skies and fire stretched across the horizon. It was not until after 3 AM when the fire activity had subsided to a point in which it could be left for the following day. By the time the crew left the Solitude fire, it had grown to over 2100 acres and remained contained within the forest boundaries that were established.

Salmon-Challis I.A. Prepositioning

With fire season well established in the Western United States, the crew was quickly dispatched to the Salmon-Challis National Forest to be prepositioned for initial attack (I.A.). The local resources were depleted in the area due to other fires, so the crew was split up into three different modules made up of the three pre-designated squads. As fires emerged, each squad was sent to I.A. small fires and put them out as quickly as possible. Each fire opened up training opportunities for the lead

crew members and senior firefighters to work on bettering their skills as a Type 1 firefighter or a Type 5 Incident Commander. Some fires were more complex than others, but each one gave the Twin Peaks crewmembers opportunities worthy of task book training. In total, the crew was dispatched to five different I.A. fires. While waiting for each fire assignment the crew staged at the Salmon Helibase, taking every opportunity to understand the inner workings of helitack operations. By the end of the first week out, the entire crew was dispatched to a large emerging incident called the Eleven Mile fire. With minimal resources available and endless steep terrain, the crew resorted to indirect tactics and prepared several historic structures to withstand the oncoming flame



Day One On The Eleven Mile Fire
Challis, ID

front. The fire continued to burn in inaccessible areas until the crew timed out on the tour, but they were notified by the IMT that their hard work had earned them a return ticket to the fire. True to their word, the crew returned to the Eleven Mile fire as soon as their mandatory R&R days were over, this time however there were a few changes to the crews overhead. Lyle Jennings returned as crew boss with his Duty Officer detail over and Ted Sneed the Alpha Squad Leader left to go on a two week Helicopter Crew Member training assignment with Wasatch Helitack in Washington and Oregon. With the Eleven Mile fire now fully staffed to attack the fire safely, Twin Peaks and other resources mounted a direct attack on the fire's edge. The crew constructed several miles of hotline as they flanked the fire and diligently maintained control of their piece of ground. Soon a weather front came in and saturated the ground with four inches of snow. The weather, along with the crews work, allowed them to mop-up the fire quickly and move on to the next fire.

Wheeler Fire

After being released from the Eleven Mile fire, Twin Peaks was in route back home when they were picked up to respond to an emerging incident in Provo Canyon, UT. The fire made headline news in Utah due to its dangerously close proximity to many homes in a nearby



Burn Operations During The Walker Fire
Idaho City, ID

community. The incident, called the Wheeler fire, burning primarily in oak brush, gave Twin Peaks a chance to fight fire close to where many members of the crew live. The crew arrived shortly before nightfall and went straight to the fireline to begin operations. Their efforts were shortly halted as aviation operations necessary to complete the attack on the fire were thwarted by an aviation stand down. A civilian operated drone was discovered flying over the fire just as a heavy air tanker was coming in to make a retardant drop. The result of the aviation stand down meant that the heavy air tanker was forced to release the retardant in a safe location away from the fire. The next day the crew battled the fire, going direct with other resources until a hose lay could be established. As the days went on, the crew moved into mop-up operations and training opportunities were sought out. Dan Walton the Charlie Squad Leader took on a Heavy Equipment Boss assignment giving his LCM, Ben Parker, a chance to run the squad. The crew finished their tour with a full 14 days and returned home.



Jake Mandelko Firing The Very Pistol During
The Walker Fire Burn Out
Idaho City, ID

END OF SEASON

After returning from the Wheeler fire Dan Walton separated from the crew to travel to Idaho in order to become certified as a Faller 1, the highest level of chainsaw felling qualifications obtainable, making him one of three Faller 1's on the crew. The next month was filled with project work mostly involving large-scale felling operations such as fuel breaks in the nearby mountain communities. On the final week of project work, the crew returned from a commuter project. Just moments after being released to go home, they were dispatched to Idaho City, Idaho to the Walker fire. The fire was burning in timber and brush understory, already having burned more than 2500 acres; the crew began to work on their assignment. The IMT devised a plan to burn out in front of the main fire by means of a largescale burn operation spanning over several divisions. The assignment given to Twin Peaks was a section of precipitous country that had yet to be scouted or assessed. The terrain was steep and thick with vegetation. After three days of hard work and steep hikes, the entire division was ready to commence with burn operations. The burn went late into the night, as the crew hand-lit the ground from the indirect line they had put in, launching flares deep interior to swade the fire to grow larger in their favor. The crew left the fire line that night

with smiles on their faces lit by the glow of the fire. Throughout the next three days, the crew proceeded to mop-up, monitor and rehab their piece of ground. They had successfully seen their last fire from start to finish, from virgin ground to rehabbed line. The crew left the last fire of the year with overwhelmingly positive feedback from the IMT and their reputation in tact as one of the best Type 2 IA crews in the nation.

OVERVIEW

The crew proved its resilience in the face of change this season, with leadership constantly shifting, it is a testament to the organization's ability to adapt and overcome. The season as a whole was average in overtime hours, but diverse in terms of crew experience. More members of Twin Peaks filled crew leadership positions and operational positions outside of the crew than ever before. The crewmembers of Twin Peaks grew on every level this year and proudly upheld Twin Peaks reputation within the fire community and with the state cooperators in their effort to achieve the Catastrophic Wildfire Reduction Strategies. With so much effort to achieve excellence, we would be remiss if we did not thank those that supported us in our efforts; to our families and friends, Thank you.



Twin Peaks Crew Tavaputs Ranch, UT



Twin Peaks on the Solitude Fire

Back Row: Wes Ashton, Ted Sneed, Rob Whitten, Austin Wilson, Dan Walton, Ben Parker, Jake
Mandelko, Dante Giacobassi, Charles Cartwright.

Front Row: Jason Thomas, Tim Inman, Austin McBride, Sam Ness, Lenin Moreno, Jason Astle, Chase Stilson, Alex Stonefelt, Tyrell Osterud, Eric Ross.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

SAWYER OF THE YEAR: JASON ASTLE

FIREFIGHTER OF THE YEAR: AUSTIN MCBRIDE

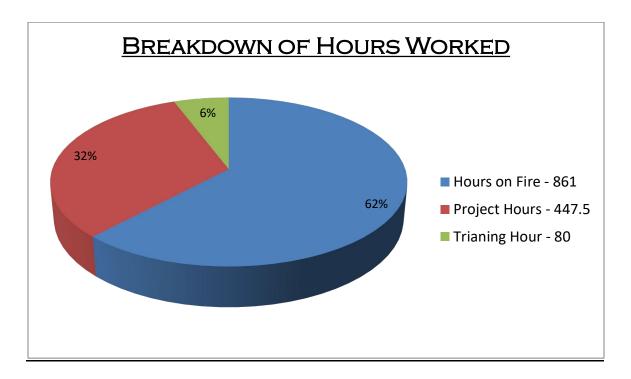
OVER THE TOP AWARD: ALEX STONEFELT

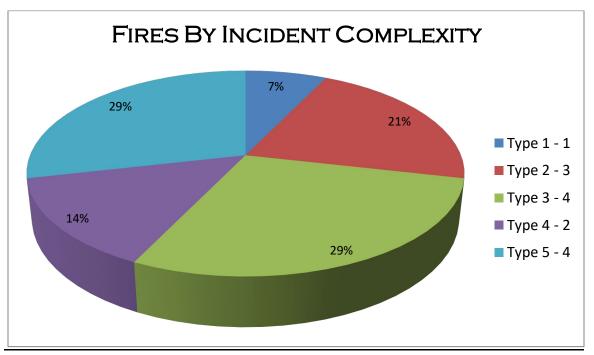
TWIN PEAKS CREW 2015

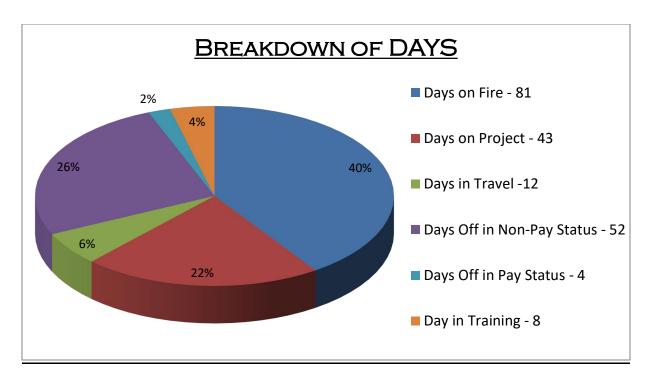
NAME POSITION DURATION

Lyle Jennings	Crew Boss	Permanent
Ted Sneed	Alpha Squad Leader	Permanent
Austin Wilson	Bravo Squad Leader	Permanent
Austin Wilson	Crew Boss	6/24/15 – 8/30/15
Dan Walton	Charlie Squad Leader	Permanent
Rob Whitten	Lead Crew Member	4/27/15 – 6/24/15
NOD WINCEIN	Bravo Squad Leader	6/24/15 – 10/29/15
Jake Mandelko	Alpha Lead Crew Member	4/27/15 – 10/29/15
Wes Ashton	Sawyer	4/27/15 – 6/24/15
Wes Ashton	Bravo Lead Crew Member	6/24/15 – 10/29/15
Ben Parker	Charlie Lead Crew Member	4/27/15 – 10/29/15
Austin McBride	Sawyer	5/4/15 – 10/29/15
Sam Ness	Sawyer	5/4/15 – 10/29/15
Lenin Moreno	Sawyer	5/4/15 – 10/29/15
Eric Ross	Sawyer	5/4/15 – 10/29/15
Jason Astle	Sawyer	5/4/15 – 10/29/15
Chase Stilson	Sawyer	5/4/15 - 8/20/15
Dante Giacobassi	Senior Firefighter	5/4/15 - 8/10/15
Cesar Ahumada	Senior Firefighter	5/4/15 – 7/20/15
Buddy Cartwright	Crew Member	5/4/15 – 10/29/15
Tim Inman	Crew Member	5/4/15 - 8/10/15
Jon Lawrey	Crew Member	5/4/15 – 6/4/15
Tyrell Osterud	Crew Member	5/4/15 – 10/29/15
Alex Stonefelt	Crew Member	5/4/15 – 10/29/15
Jason Thomas	Crew Member	5/4/15 – 10/29/15
Jessie DiYanni	Crew Member - Detailer	8/30/15 - 10/29/15
Brad Kurtz	Crew Member - Detailer	8/1/15 – 10/29/15
Jeremy Larsen	Crew Member - Detailer	7/10/15 – 10/29/15
Thayne Stockman	Crew Member - Detailer	8/30/15 – 10/29/15

2015 SEASON DATA







TWIN PEAKS 2015 CRITICAL TRAINING

TRAINING	DATE	HOURS
PACK TEST/JHA	5/4/2015	1.5
SOG'S	5/4/2015	2
OREINTATION	5/4/2015	.5
CHIPPER TRAINING	5/4/2015	.75
RADIO REFRESHER	5/4/2015	.5
CREW PT	5/4/2015	1
IDP'S	5/4/2015	2
SQUAD HIT LIST	5/4/2015	4.5
SQUAD DUTIES	5/4/2015	.5
GEAR ISSUE	5/4/2015	.5
GEAR CHECK	5/5/2015	.25
VEHICHLE INVENTORY	5/5/2015	.5
SIX MIN/JHA	5/5/2015	.5
PT HIKE	5/5/2015	2.25
SIX MIN. FOR SAFETY	5/5/2015	.25
PT HIKE	5/6/2015	2
SQUAD BREAK OUT	5/6/2015	1
LUNCH		
LIGHTNING PROTOCAL	5/6/2015	.5
DOWNHILL LINE	5/6/2015	.5
LAST RESORT SURVIVAL	5/6/2015	1
SQUAD BREAK OUTS	5/6/2015	1
SPIKE OUT PROTOCAL	5/6/2015	1
YOGA PT	5/6/2015	1

TOOL SHARPENING	5/6/2015	.5
ICT5 TRAINING	5/6/2015	2.25
FIRELINE PRODUCTION	5/6/2015	1
SAWLINE PRODUCTION	5/6/2015	1
MEDICAL SCENARIO AND	5/6/2015	1.5
BLOOD BORN		
PATHOGEONS		
AAR	5/7/2015	1
PT HIKE	5/7/2015	1
AAR	5/7/2015	1
REHAB FROM FIELD DAYS	5/7/2015	1
ROOKIES S-212	5/11/2015	9
CREW PT	5/11/2015	1
RT-130	5/11/2015	9
PT	5/11/2015	1
ROOKIES S-212	5/12/2015	8
RT-212	5/12/2015	2
CISM	5/12/2015	1.25
PT HIKE	5/12/2015	1
S-212 FIELD DAY	5/13/2015	11
CREW PT	5/14/2015	1
PREP FOR BASE REVIEW	5/14/2015	3.5
BASE REVIEW	5/14/2015	5
STATE MANAGEMENT	5/14/2015	.5
TALK		

2015 INCIDENT HISTORY

Mgmt. Level (e.g. I, II, III, IV, or IA)	Risk Type (WF, RX)	Date	Position Code	Incident Name	Incident Number	Operation Periods (#) of Periods	Fire Size Class	Fuel Type
I	RX	6/17-6/21	CREW	Cold Springs RX	UT-SES 005034	5	E	8
IV	WF	6/21-6/23	CREW	Memorial	UT-ASF-000055	3	D	4
III	WF	6/28-7/1	CREW	Mount Emma	AZ-ASD-0000229	7	F	10
IV	WF	7/1-7/5	CREW	Berry Fire	UT-VLD-000075	5	С	6
III	WF	7/16-7/20	CREW	High Meadow	AZ-ASD-000406	5	F	10
III	WF	7/27-8/10	CREW	Solitude	UT-FIF-005153	14	F	3
V	WF	8/14	BRAVO	Frying Pan	MT-BDF-001241	1	А	6
V	WF	8/16-8/18	ALPHA	Beartrap	ID-SCF-000202	3	В	9
V	WF	8/14-8/16	CHARLIE	256	ID-SCF-000186	3	В	10
V	WF	8/20	BRAVO	Pony Fire	ID-SCF-002015	1	Α	10
II	WF	8/24-8/28	CREW	Eleven Mile	ID-SCF-015218	4	G	10
II	WF	8/31-9/8	CREW	Eleven Mile	ID-SCF-015218	7	G	10
III	WF	9/8-9/13	CREW	Wheeler	UT-NES-020698	6	E	4
II	WF	10/13-10/19	CREW	Walker	ID-SWS-001299	4	G	10
			ncidents His	tory for Detail A	ssignments		l.	
IV	WF	9/14-9/15	HECM	Dry Gulch	OR-9725-001159	2	F	10
I	WF	9/2-9/14	HECM	Grizzly Bear	OR-UMF-000947	12	G	10
III	WF	8/25-8/27	TFLD	Santaquin	UT-UWF-639	3	E	5
II	WF	8/5-8/19	FAL1/FFT1	Gasquet Complex	CA-SRF-001488	14	G	8

SEASON DATA SUMMERY		
QUESTIONS		RESPONSE
	AVAILABLITY	
1	Total days crew was assembled?	179
1a	Start Date	5/4/2015
1b	End Date	10/29/2015
2	Total number of days assigned to incidents? (Includes travel)	81
2a	How many days were in official travel status?	2
2b	How many 14 day assignments were completed during total number of days assigned?	3
2bb	How many assignment extensions?	0
2c	Number of days on project work while assigned? (list specific type: e.g. Trails, fuels etc.)	0
2d	Number of days on project work while not assigned?	43
3	Total number of days off?	56
3a	Days off in pay status?	4

3b	Days off in non- pay status?	52		
3c	Number of days in station or otherwise and not accounted for above?	0		
	TRAINING			
4	Number of days in training?	8		
5	Number of instructor hours dedicated to non-crew training courses?	5		
5a	Number of task books initiated?	2		
5b	Number of task books completed?	6		
	TRANSPORTATION			
6	Total miles driven? (Total of all vehicles)	53,229		
7	How many vehicles do you have?	5		
8	Number of vehicle accidents? (Vehicle down for repair due to accident)	0		
8a	Number of injury vehicle accidents?	0		
8b	Vehicle accidents above where fault was Government Driver?	0		
9	Number of days vehicle down for failure or repairs? (Non-accident, total all vehicles)	2		
10	How many times did your crew fly? (Count each leg as a flight)	3		
10a	Commercial	0		
10b	Charter	0		
	PERSONNEL			
11	Total number of funded personnel on crew?	21		
12	On average how many personnel did you have on incidents?	20		
12a	Number of days crew leadership fulfilled incident leadership positions?	11		
13	Total number of career appointments?	4		
14	Number of career positions that were vacant?	0		
15	Number of career employee's on the crews that are eligible for retirement in the next 5 years?	0		
	ACCIDENTS AND INJURIES			
16	Number of non-injury incidents? (bee stings, poison oak, etc)	10		
17	Number of injury accidents?	0		
18	Number of injury accidents that required medical attention? (no lost time)	0		
19	Number of injury accidents that required medical attention? (lost time)	0		
	PROJECTS			
20	Total Fuels Treatment Acres? (while assigned and unassigned)	138.9		
20a	Mechanical? (which includes RX prep work)	3		
20b	Burned?	1000		
20c	Fuel break completed(linear distance)	47.3		