

United States
Department
of Agriculture

Forest Service



THIRTY-MILE FIRE ACCIDENT INVESTIGATION TEAM

The investigation team assigned to the Thirty-Mile Fire began examining events and circumstances in the deaths of four firefighters on July 11. More than 125 interviews and witness statements were completed involving nearly 60 people—surviving firecrew members, fire managers, line officers and others. Some were interviewed more than once.

In addition, the team examined physical evidence, weather data, fire suppression safety equipment, dispatch logs and personnel and equipment resource orders.

The team’s findings and recommendations were forwarded to an accident review board, which will produce an action report intended to improve wildland firefighter safety.

The investigation team constitutes a highly experienced level of public land management expertise in the fields of wildland fire and weather behavior, suppression tactics, safety, firecrew skills, training and equipment. Five key members of the team—including the team leader—have more than 30 years of agency experience each; most have prior experience in serious accident investigations, several involving fire fatalities. The team’s chief investigator, a private-sector non-agency member, has been involved in investigations or reviews of about 50 fatal accidents and has been engaged in human error analysis, safety management and safety improvement programs for over twenty years.

Jim Furnish	Team Leader	Deputy Chief, National Forest System, U.S. Forest Service, Washington D.C.
Kent Connaughton	Line Officer	Deputy Regional Forester Pacific SW region Vallejo, CA
Alan Chockie	Chief Investigator	Chockie Group International, Inc. Seattle, WA
Tony Kern	Human Factors	Nat’l Interagency Fire Center Boise, ID
George Jackson	Equipment Specialist	Technology & Development Center Missoula, MT
Rich Lasko	Fire Behavior	Northern Region Missoula, MT
Chuck Whitlock	Safety Mgr.	Technology & Development Center Missoula, MT
Ron DeHart	Public Affairs Officer	Mt. Baker-Snoqualmie Nat’l Forest Mountlake Terrace, WA
Dave Dash	Fire Operations	Alaska Fire Service Ft. Wainwright, AK

Jim Prange	Weather Specialist	Nat'l Weather Service Seattle, WA
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Other team members:

Brenda Graham	Weather Specialist	No. California Service Center Reading, CA
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Ben Croft	Photographer/ Videographer	Technology & Development Center Missoula, MT
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Michael Bonkowski	Compliance Officer	Occupational Safety & Health Leader Administration – Bellevue, WA
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Dave Baker	Compliance Officer	Occupational Safety & Health Administration – Bellevue, WA
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Jeanne Pincha-Tulley	Plans/Documentation	Tahoe Nat'l Forest Nevada City, CA
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Shari Miller	Documentation	Okanogan-Wenatchee Nat'l Forests - Wenatchee, WA
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Leslie Anderson	Equipment Specialist	Technology & Development Center Missoula, MT
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Joe Duran	Union Representative	Los Padres Nat'l Forest Santa Maria, CA
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Bill McConnell	Law Enforcement	Colville Nat'l Forest Liaison Colville, WA
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Ron Gross	Global Positioning/	Okanogan-Wenatchee Nat'l Geographic Information Forests - Twisp, WA
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Troy Corn	Okanogan-Wenatchee	Okanogan-Wenatchee Nat'l Nat'l Forest Liaison – Entiat, WA
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Arnie Brosten	Logistics	Flathead Nat'l Forest Big Fork, MT
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