

24 Hour Preliminary Report

To: Tom Nichols, Designated Agency Safety and Health Official, Wildland Fire
From: Dirk Wiley, Chief Ranger, Cumberland Gap NHP
Subject: 24 Hour Report, Dark Ridge C felling accident

THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION IS PRELIMINARY AND SUBJECT TO CHANGE

LOCATION: Cumberland Gap National Historical Park (Dark Ridge)

DATE OF OCCURRENCE: November 29th, 2009

TIME OF OCCURRENCE: Approximately 1130 hours

TEAM LEADER (POSITION): Dirk Wiley, Chief Ranger, Cumberland Gap NHP

ACTIVITY: Hazard fuels reduction (felling snags)

NUMBER & TYPE OF INJURIES: One, non-life threatening

NARRATIVE:

On November 29th, 2009 a Big South Fork (BISO) FirePro crewmember was felling a snag-topped oak tree on the park boundary in preparation for a prescribed burn. The Cumberland Gap (CUGA) Wildland Fire Module supervisor noticed that the tree was not falling as expected, and moved to the tree to assist with placing wedges. The tree then broke free and pivoted before falling against the CUGA Wildland Fire Module supervisor pinning him to the ground.

Crew members immediately radioed for assistance and began cutting and removing the tree. Local EMS was transported to the scene, where the injured employee was stabilized and then taken to a waiting helicopter for transport to the University of Tennessee Trauma Center for definitive care.

An After Action Review was conducted November 30th, 2009, with the Park Chief Ranger/FMO and the Big South Fork FirePro members. BISO crew provided written statements of the incident, and discussed both the specific events during the incident, and also made general recommendations regarding emergency response.

All further work on fire projects in the park were put on hold pending a safety stand down, completion of the Non Serious Accident Investigation Team visit, and a Critical Incident Stress Debriefing for the staff. The NSAIT members are tentatively scheduled to arrive on December 1st to continue the investigation.

cc:

SER ARD-Operations

SER Chief Ranger

SER FMO

NPS FMPC Fire Safety and Prevention Program Manager

CUGA Superintendent