

72 Hour Report - Incident 398 Fatality

To: Charles Byrd, Pacific Northwest Region, Safety and Occupational Health

From: Thomas A. Contreras - Facilitated Learning Analysis Team Leader

Subject: Tree Strike with Fatality, Incident 398, Deschutes National Forest, Oregon

What: Serious Injury, Fatality

When: August 1st, 2013

Summary: Incident 398 was lightning caused and reported as $\frac{1}{10}$ acre at 1654 on July 31st 2013. On the following day, two contract fallers were assigned to this incident along with several other firefighters. At approximately 0900 the contract fallers were preparing to fall a large Doug Fir tree which was burning at about 70 feet above ground. All other firefighters had hiked away from this tree to provide a safe distance for falling. The fallers were at the base of the tree, but had not yet begun cutting the tree, when the top portion of the tree with several green limbs attached broke away from the main tree and fell upon the contract fallers. One faller was killed instantly. The other faller was knocked to the ground, breaking both of his scapula bones.

The injured individual was able to notify the incident commander, who declared a medical emergency and redirected all operations to medical aid and transport. Deschutes county 911 and Central Oregon Dispatch were notified of the need for EMS. The injured individual later hiked out of the fire area with assistance of agency EMTs and was transported by pick up truck, then ground ambulance and then transferred to an air ambulance for transport to St. Charles Medical Center in Bend, Oregon for treatment of injuries.

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