

# **GREEN SHEET**

**CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF FORESTRY AND FIRE PROTECTION**

**INVESTIGATION SUMMARIES OF SERIOUS CDF INJURIES, ILLNESSES,  
ACCIDENTS AND NEAR-MISS INCIDENTS**



**OV-10A AIRTACTICAL PLANE CRASH**

**SEPTEMBER 6, 2006**

**MOUNTAIN FIRE**

**INCIDENT NUMBER 06-CA-TUU-010573**

**ACCIDENT REVIEW INCIDENT NUMBER 06-CA-CDF-000571**

**SOUTHERN REGION**

**A board of review has not approved this Summary Report. It is intended as a safety and training tool, an aid to preventing future occurrences, and to inform interested parties. Because it is published on a short time frame, the information contained herein is subject to revision as further investigation is conducted and additional information is developed.**

## **SUMMARY**

On September 6, 2006 Air Attack 410, while assigned to the Mountain Incident (CATUU010573), crashed into the mountainous terrain northeast of Porterville. The pilot and Battalion Chief on board were killed. No other aircraft were reported to be in the area. Ground and air resources immediately responded to the accident and extinguished a vegetation fire surrounding the accident site and the fire involving the wreckage. The National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) is the lead investigatory authority. The Serious Accident Investigation Team continues to work under the NTSB lead.

## **CONDITIONS**

Air Attack 410 is a North American Aviation Inc., OV-10A, N419DF. The flight was conducted under the provisions of 14 CFR Part 91. The California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CDF) acquired the OV-10A from the Department of Defense and converted it for use as an air attack airplane.

Visual Meteorological conditions prevailed during the accident. Clear weather prevailed during the morning of the accident. The flight was operated under visual rules with clear skies and 10 mile visibility.

The initial point of impact (IPI) occurred at 6,240 feet mean sea level in a box-like canyon.

## **SEQUENCE OF EVENTS**

A series of three fires had occurred in the Bear Creek drainage, 22 statute miles northeast of Porterville, Tulare County, California, beginning Monday, September 4, 2006. The Mountain Fire was reported at about 12:45 A.M on September 6, 2006. A request for a reconnaissance flight of the area was processed through the Visalia ECC that morning.

On September 6, 2006 Air Attack 410 was dispatched to a reconnaissance flight of the Bear Creek drainage. At 10:26 A.M. the Battalion Chief (BC) working in the Air Tactical Group Supervisor (ATGS) capacity onboard Air Attack 410 confirmed with the Visalia Emergency Command Center their status as in route to the incident and confirmed the Command frequency.

Shortly thereafter, Air Attack 410 contacted the Mountain Incident Commander (IC) on the assigned Tactical frequency. Mountain IC and the ATGS maintained radio transmissions regarding the flight mission until approximately 10 to 15 seconds prior to

the accident. At no time during the accident flight were communications received indicating that any mechanical difficulty or unusual situation had occurred.

After flying up the Bear Creek drainage, at approximately 10:39 A.M. Air Attack 410 impacted trees and rising mountainous terrain in the Mountain Home Demonstration State Forest (MHSF). The airplane was owned and operated by the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CDF), and it was destroyed during the impact sequence and post impact ground fire. The airline transport certified pilot and ATGS passenger were fatally injured.

Witnesses located in the MHSF near the Bear Creek Road reported observing and/or hearing the Air Attack 410 as it flew in a northeasterly direction toward the accident site. One witness observed the airplane flying between 400 to 600 feet above the treetops, as it was proceeding in a northerly direction up the Bear Creek drainage. Another witness reported hearing the airplane's engines revving up, and thereafter heard the sound of an impact.

Based upon an examination of the accident site and airplane wreckage, the initial point of impact (IPI) occurred with estimated 125-foot-tall trees. The trees were based on 25- to 40-degree up sloping 6,240-foot mean sea level (msl) terrain in a box-like canyon. The tops of several trees were found severed, trunks were observed gouged, and fragmented airframe components were noted around the tree.

The magnetic bearing from the area of the impacted trees to the main wreckage was estimated between 060 to 070 degrees. The main wreckage was found about 120 feet northeast of the IPI area. One tree with an estimated 3-foot diameter was observed felled in this area, and airplane components were noted around the tree.

The global positioning system (GPS) coordinates for the main wreckage were 36 degrees 13.9 minutes north latitude by 118 degrees 41.1 minutes west longitude.

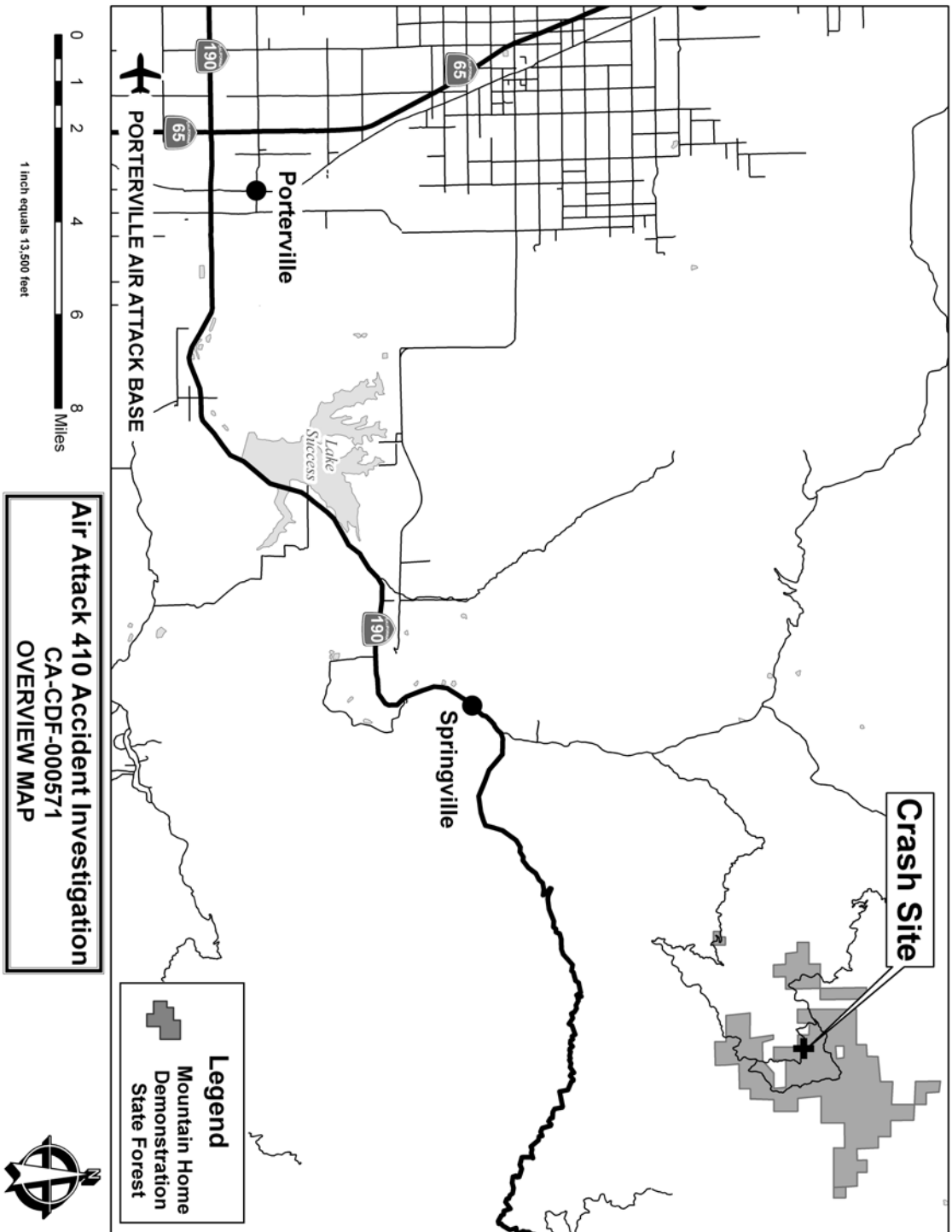
Ground and air resources immediately responded to the accident and extinguished a vegetation fire surrounding the accident site and the fire involving the wreckage.

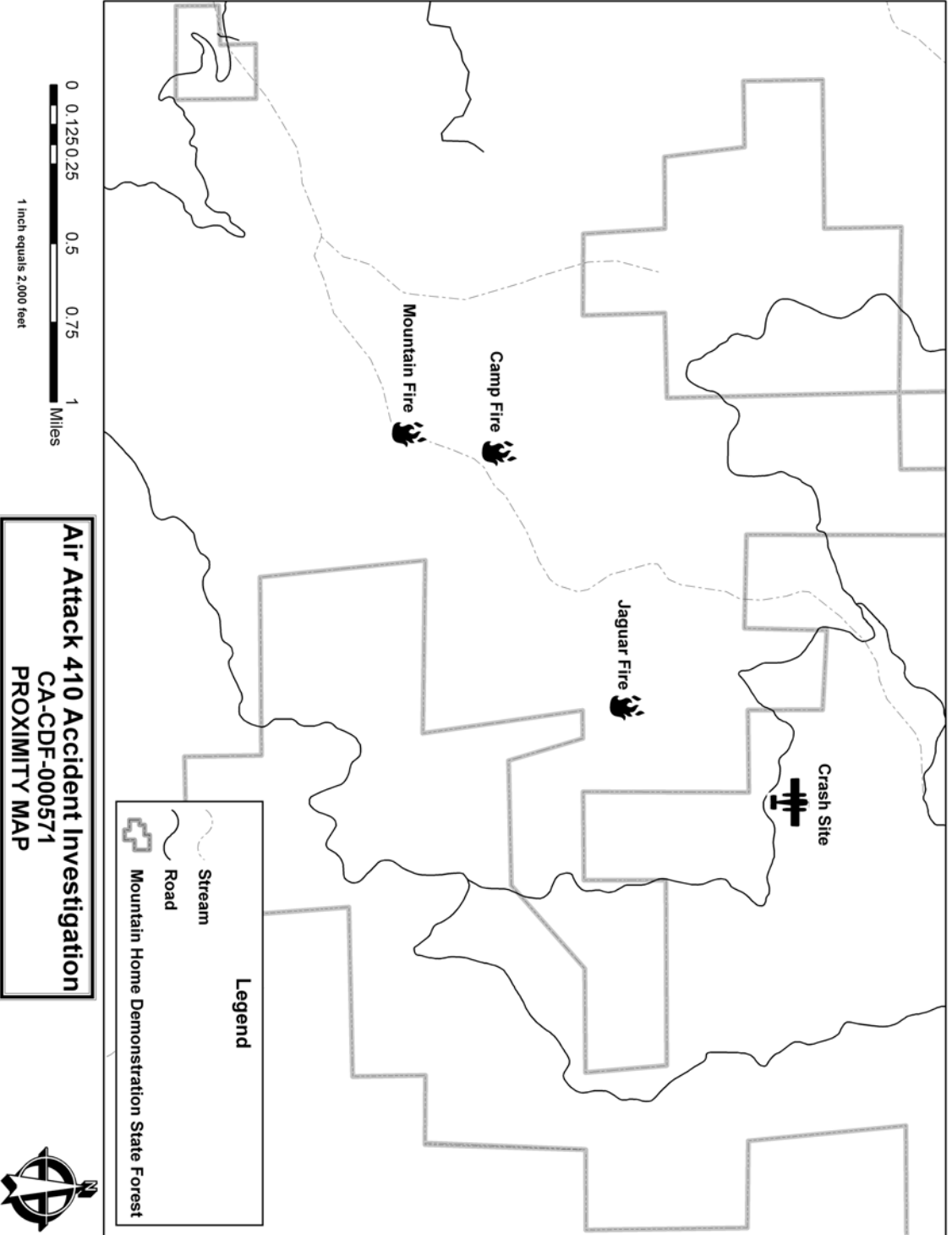
## **INJURIES/DAMAGES**

Both occupants on board Air Attack 410 were fatally injured.

## **SAFETY ISSUES FOR REVIEW**

No immediate safety issues have been released by the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB), the lead investigative agency. CDF is working tirelessly alongside the NTSB throughout the investigation process. All possible causes are being researched, and no conclusions will be drawn prematurely. Once determined any conclusions will be interpreted into recommendations and shared with all in order to assist us in staying safe.





**Air Attack 410 Accident Investigation**  
CA-CDF-000571  
**PROXIMITY MAP**

