

Mustang Complex Rollover FLA

Facilitative

Learning

Analysis

To learn more information about this process go to:

<http://wildfirelessons.net/OrgLearning.aspx>

FLA Team

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The Mustang complex is located in the mountains around North Fork, Idaho expanding across the Idaho and Montana border in the Salmon-Challis National Forest. The mountains in this area can easily be described as straight up and straight down. Roads are dirt and rock, narrow, windy, have no guard rails and can be challenging at times to drive.

The strike team on Division Romeo had been working the fire for several days performing various duties and tasks as needed. On this particular day the strike team was assigned to a new part of the division filling pumpkins at the top of a road that leads to a lookout.

Strike Team Leader George took the lead as they drove the new area to ensure the road was safe for the engines to maneuver. The Strike Team successfully made it to the lookout and put water in the pumpkins. George remembers some of the members of the strike team talking about how dusty the roads were on the trip up. George has encountered this before throughout his career and describes it as “poof” dust. The strike team drove back down the mountain to refill engines. On the trip back up, having established that the roads were drivable by the engines, George brought up the rear on

the way back to the pumpkins. On one particular corner, the dust was heavy in the air and the sun was at the perfect angle that as the last engine rounded the corner the sun shot straight into George’s eyes. He reached up, pulled the visor down and suddenly realized the road had disappeared. He doesn’t remember much else after a brief moment of panic. He recalls being pulled out of his pickup with people telling him he had rolled his vehicle and then he can remember being in the ambulance as he was transported to the hospital.

Lessons Learned from George

1. When driving roads that have the kind of dust that lingers in the air increase your following distance more than normal.
2. If you are on an incident and the roads are really dusty, request dust abatement. Dust abatement can help with visibility and with keeping the roads more compact for the equipment driving on them.

