

Informational Summary Report of Serious or Near Serious CAL FIRE Injuries, Illnesses and Accidents



GREEN SHEET

Entrapment With Burn Injuries

July 18, 2026

Brook Incident

26-CA-SHU-008640

26-CA-SHU-008699

California Northern Region

SUMMARY

On Saturday, July 18, 2026, at approximately 1700 hours a CAL FIRE Helitack Crew (HTC1) was engaged in firefighting operations on the Brook Incident in Shasta County, California. While on the fireline, fire intensity increased significantly, resulting in multiple spot fires in the area that led to an entrapment of HTC1. As a result, members of HTC1 suffered burn injuries and were treated by incident personnel before being transported to local Redding area hospitals.

Use the video below to follow along with the Green Sheet.



Figure 1: Incident Storyboard

This Informational Summary Report is intended to enhance safety and training, aid in preventing future occurrences, and to inform interested parties. Because the report is published in a short time frame, the information contained herein is subject to revision as further investigation is conducted and/or additional information is developed.

CONDITIONS

The accident site is located within the perimeter of the Brook Incident, a 502 acre wildland fire within the CAL FIRE Shasta – Trinity Unit (SHU).

Location:

The Brook Incident is located in an unincorporated area of Shasta County near the communities of Bella Vista and Jones Valley, approximately 11 miles northeast of Redding, California. The entrapment occurred on the left flank of the fire, on Division Charlie. The entrapment site is located along a two-track dirt road identified as Holbrook Drive.

Weather:

- Temperature: 95° Fahrenheit
- Elevation: 985 feet
- Relative Humidity: 16%
- Winds: South @ 5 MPH, gusts up to 11 MPH
- Fine Dead Fuel Moisture: 3%
- Probability of Ignition: 91
- Weather reading taken from Highland RAWS, located approximately ¾ mile northwest of the entrapment site.

Fire Behavior:

The Brook Incident is within the footprint of the 1999 Jones Fire and the 2004 Bear Fire. This fire history did not influence the fire spread, as the primary carrier of the fire was annual grasses.

The initial spread of the Brook Incident was due to terrain driven winds in alignment with the slope. Torching conifers and pockets of brush were present, casting numerous embers ahead of the fire and accelerating its spread.

[Click here to read the full Brooks Fire Behavior and Weather Summary.](#)

Fuel Type:

The Brook Incident occurred within the grass oak woodland. The primary fuel component was grass. The brush burned when it was aligned with wind and slope, but generally was not a part of the fire environment. The live fuel moistures were 101%,

which is above the historical average. The 100-hour fuels were at 8%, and the 1000-hour fuels were at 9%.

[Click here to read the full SHU Fuel Moisture Report July 15, 2026.](#)

Road Conditions:

The road system within the fire area consisted of single lane, dirt roads and two-track ranch roads. The road accessing the entrapment site can be characterized as a mid-slope, two-track road. Annual grasses were present on either side of the road and in the middle portion of the road.

Topography:

The Brook Incident was burning in rolling foothills to the east of the Sacramento Valley. The entrapment occurred on a western facing aspect with an approximate 27% slope. The entrapment site was located on a mid-slope, two-track road which runs north-south in between a series of small knobs and draws. Local topography and wind patterns led to swirling winds (see Figure 2) near the entrapment site.

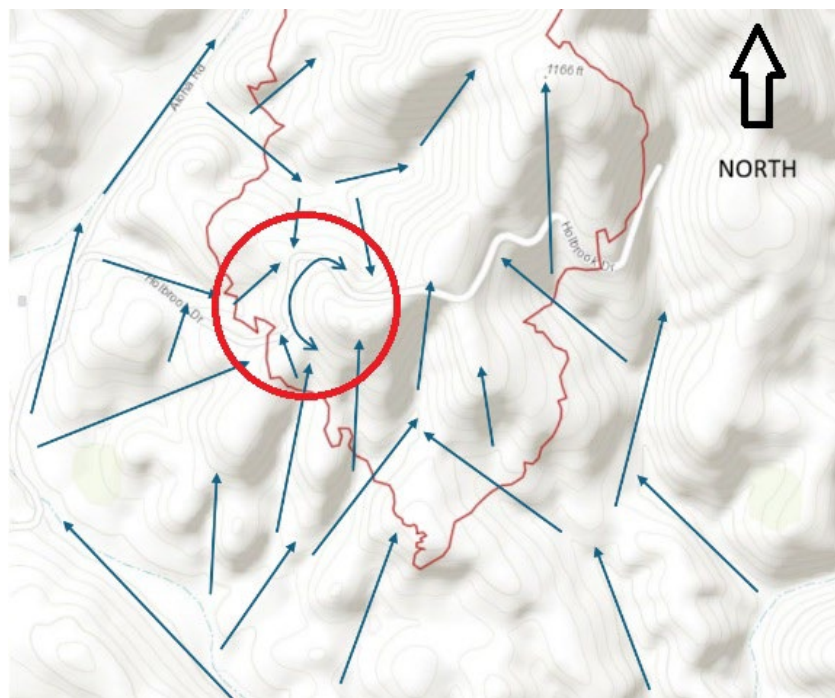


Figure 2: Incident Wind Patterns

SEQUENCE OF EVENTS

On Saturday, July 18, 2026, at 1611 hours, resources from CAL FIRE SHU were dispatched to a wildland fire, named the Brook Incident, located on Holbrook Drive, in the community of Bella Vista, an unincorporated area of Shasta County, California. The initial wildland response was a high dispatch. Prior to dispatch, a United States Forest Service (USFS) Short SD3-60 Sherpa (AA1) was performing a proficiency flight to test Crew Resource Management as an Air Attack (AA) platform. AA1 was staffed with two pilots and two qualified Air Tactical Group Supervisors. During this proficiency flight, AA1 observed smoke from the Brook Incident, and reported the fire to the Redding Emergency Command Center. At 1612 hours, AA1 reported on Forest Net that the fire was approximately two acres in size and advised AA1 would be assuming Brook AA. At approximately 1621 hours, Copter 1 (C1) with Helitack Crew 1 (HTC1) departed their respective Helitack Base enroute to the Brook Incident. HTC1 consisted of Fire Captain 1 (FC1) and six firefighters, FF1, FF2, FF3, FF4, FF5, and FF6.

At approximately 1623 hours, AA1 reported the Brook Incident to be 20 acres in size. AA1 reported the fire was actively burning on all flanks with a structure threat and a resource order was placed by AA1 for two additional Type 1 airtankers. At 1627 hours, Battalion Chief 1 (BC1) assumed Brook Incident Commander and assigned Battalion Chief 2 (BC2) as Operations. Engine 1 (E1) was staffed with a traditional staffing model of a Fire Captain (FC2) who was functioning as Division Charlie for the Brook Incident, a Fire Apparatus Engineer (FAE1), and a firefighter.

At 1635 hours, BC1 established the left flank as the priority for AA1 based upon the threat to the community of Jones Valley. At 1638 hours, AA1 reported the fire to be 30 acres, pushing north towards Shasta Lake, and spotting ahead of itself. At 1641 hours, AA1 reported the fire to be 40 acres with spotting and advised that the incident was going to be an extended attack incident.

C1 completed a left hand orbit around the Brook Incident and located a Landing Zone (LZ) near the heel on the left flank, however the pilot felt this LZ was too tight because of an obstacle. At approximately 1649 hours, C1 found an adequate LZ along the left flank, allowing C1 to insert HTC1. HTC1 was tooled out with four back pumps, four McBrooms, two Rhinos, one Pulaski, and one saw with pack. HTC1 made access to the fires edge via the two-track road.

At approximately 1652 hours, BC1 requested to switch to Shasta Command and add one additional Tactical (TAC) channel for the incident. At 1657 hours, an airtanker was diverted from the incident, and at 1701 hours AA1 requested a relief AA for 1900 hours.

At 1704 hours, AA1 communicated with FC1 on the assigned Air to Ground and requested FC1 to be the contact for clearing the line for airtanker drops.

HTC1 chose to engage in hot spotting tactics utilizing hand tools and back pumps. They established an anchor point by bringing fire downslope with the McBrooms, tying into the two-track road. HTC1 then progressed in a westerly direction continuing to establish black line on the upslope of the two-track road along their route of travel. FC1 identified the black as an escape route and HTC1 then continued north along the two-track, blackening the line with the McBroom's when needed. At the first in-turn on the two-track, HTC1 had face to face communication with a FAE (FAE2) from Engine 2 (E2). Also present was an additional Engine (E3). FC1 asked FAE2 to cool the area east of the two-track because of heavy fuels and fire activity in the area. Just prior to the entrapment, FAE2 called HTC1 to try to tell them to get in the black due to numerous spot fires around the engine. FC2 also contacted HTC1 on the assigned TAC frequency regarding a flare up northwest of E1.

C1 contacted FC1, and while attempting to respond, FC1 removed their glove to increase dexterity and adjust the priority scan button on the radio. At the same time, FF6 observed spot fires west of the two-track and down slope of their location. Several members of HTC1 started moving towards the spot fires. FC1 observed multiple spot fires, rapidly combining approximately 150 feet below the two-track and yelled to HTC1 to come back from their attempt to engage. Due to the critical rate of spread of the combined spot fires in the grass and trees, FC1 directed HTC1 into the newly created black above the two-track. The estimated time of the entrapment was 1705 hours. During the entrapment, several of the firefighters described everything being orange and feeling intense heat with no visibility. During interviews after the entrapment one of the firefighters from HTC1 said,

“... everything happened so fast.”, further explaining that it was “crazy how fast it just had happened ... you didn't have time to really process. It was just that adrenaline, like fight or flight. And you weren't doing no fightin' so it was just like get out of there.”

The firefighters from HTC1 stated they did not have time to deploy their shrouds. FC1 was able to deploy their shroud during the entrapment but was not able to secure it around their face.

HTC1 retreated in the black in a southerly direction upslope and parallel to the two-track. HTC1 gathered together to shield themselves from the initial wave of radiant heat, then continued to move in a southerly direction. FC1 paused to conduct an accountability check for the firefighters assigned to HTC1. After the initial accountability

check, HTC1 continued parallel to the two-track to escape the heat and smoke. After escaping the heat and smoke, FC1 conducted a second accountability check at approximately 1707 hours where they recognized all members of HTC1 had suffered burn injuries.

FC1 attempted to contact BC2, advising there were multiple burned firefighters on Division Charlie. The assigned ground TAC frequency was congested with other traffic, so FC2 acknowledged and relayed the traffic to BC2. HTC1 continued in the direction of E1 and a fourth Engine (E4). HTC1 was able to escape to the location of E1 and FC2.

FC2 began assessing HTC1 and provided medical care. At the same time, C1 heard radio traffic regarding the injuries, aborted the dip, and proceeded to locate an LZ to extract the firefighters. FC2 utilized two HTC1 firefighters, FF3 and FF5, to assist in providing burn care to the remaining HTC1 members, utilizing the CAL FIRE Burn Kit. When FAE1 returned up the hoselay to E1, they assisted with medical care for HTC1. A responding Battalion Chief (BC3) heard radio traffic regarding the burn injuries and utilized Tablet Command to navigate to E1's location. At approximately 1721 hours, HTC1 was loaded in BC3's vehicle, with four HTC1 members located inside the cab, and three on the tailgate. BC3 and FC1 decided to transport HTC1 members to an LZ for extraction by C1. At 1721 hours, three medic units were ordered to report to a fire station in Jones Valley. At 1722 hours, after learning that HTC1 was being picked up by C1, BC1 diverted the three medic units to the Incident Command Post, located at a fire station in Bella Vista.

At 1722 hours, C1 landed at the new LZ, west of the entrapment and treatment sites. At 1728 hours, HTC1 loaded into C1 and advised BC1 that they were enroute to Benton Airpark. Around the same time, the three medic units were diverted from the fire station in Bella Vista to Benton Airpark. At 1730 hours, C1 departed the LZ enroute to Benton Airpark to rendezvous with ground ambulances. At 1737 hours, C1 landed at Benton Airpark, where an Emergency Medical Services (EMS) Supervisor was waiting to begin triaging the injured firefighters.

FF2, FF3, FF4, FF5, and FF6 were transported via ground ambulance to Dignity Health Mercy Medical Center in Redding, California and arrived at 1755 hours. FC1 and FF1 were transported via ground ambulance to Shasta Regional Medical Center in Redding, California and arrived at 1758 hours. The estimated time from entrapment to arrival at a local Redding area hospital was less than one hour.



Figure 3: Incident Overview Video

INJURIES/DAMAGES

Immediately after the entrapment, all seven firefighters were transported to two local hospitals for initial assessment and stabilization. On arrival, the emergency department initiated burn care, checked for airway involvement, and offered pain management. At that time, the injuries reported by the local area hospitals were:

- FC1 suffered first and second-degree burns to the back of the left hand, and a four inch to five inch burn to the left forearm and wrist area.
- FF1 suffered second-degree burns to the left wrist, first and second-degree burns to the front of the left thigh, first-degree burns to the back of the left thigh, and first-degree burns to the nose, ears, and back of the left knee. The Total Burn Surface Area (TBSA*) was determined to be 7%.
- FF2 suffered first-degree burns to the face, from the nose to the lower neck, and first and second-degree burns to the back of both thighs and the left forearm. The TBSA* was determined to be 15%.
- FF3 suffered first-degree burns to the left elbow, legs, and genitalia, first and second-degree burns to the back of both forearms, and second-degree burns to the nose and right elbow.
- FF4 suffered first and second-degree burns to the face, neck, and wrist area, with blistering across the lower face and anterior neck.
- FF5 suffered first-degree burns to the lower face, neck, and to the back of both legs, and second-degree burns to the right elbow. The TBSA* was determined to be 5%.
- FF6 suffered first-degree burns to the face, and second-degree burns to the back of the left elbow.

All treated employees were provided with discharge instructions to return to their primary care physician or seek additional treatment if their injuries worsened. During the time period immediately following discharge, the firefighters' burn injuries evolved, developing deeper partial-thickness characteristics and expanding areas of blistering, elevating the degree of burn they suffered. The following day, FF4's burn injuries displayed worsening effects, and they sought additional treatment at UC Davis Burn Unit. Upon release, FF4 recommended that the other involved firefighters also seek further care. FC1, FF1, FF2, and FF3 acted on the recommendation from FF4 and sought additional treatment at the Burn Unit. While there, firefighters received advanced wound management and care for their burn injuries.

**TBSA was determined from hospital records after the entrapment. A TBSA was not provided by the medical facility for all firefighters involved.*

SAFETY ISSUES FOR REVIEW

- Ensure all PPE is maintained, worn, and cleaned in a manner to provide the intended protective properties of the item in accordance with [Handbook 1700](#).
 - **Wildland helmet shrouds** should be worn to provide neck, ear, and facial protection from radiant heat or direct flame contact ([Handbook 1722: Head, Neck, and Ear Protection](#)).
 - **Wildland goggles** shall be worn during all phases of wildland firefighting, including handline construction, hoselays, mop up, and mobile attack. Sunglasses are not considered eye protection during wildland firefighting operations ([Handbook 1723: Eye and Face Protection](#)).
 - **Wildland firefighting jacket** sleeves shall be rolled down to provide protection to the wrist and lower arm from radiant heat or direct flame contact ([Handbook 1725: Body Protection](#)).
 - **Wildland gloves** shall be worn during all phases of wildland firefighting, including handline construction, hoselays, mop up, and mobile attack, to protect hands from radiant heat, burning objects, or direct flame contact ([Handbook 1726: Hand and Wrist Protection](#)).
- Train with your equipment to ensure you understand the abilities and limitations of manipulating it while wearing all PPE.

INCIDENTAL ISSUES/LESSONS LEARNED

- Burn Treatment – Cool Running Water ([CAL FIRE Handbook 7243](#))
 - Employees shall be educated and trained in CAL FIRE Burn Treatment Policies and Procedures, including the application of 20 Minutes of Cool Running Water.
- 10 Standard Fire Orders
 - #2 Know what your fire is doing at all times.
 - #3 Base all actions on current and expected behavior of the fire.
 - #5 Post lookouts when there is possible danger.
 - #7 Maintain prompt communication with your forces, supervisor, and adjoining forces.
- 18 Fire Situations That Shout “Watch OUT!”
 - #5 Uninformed on strategy, tactics, and hazards.
 - #6 Instructions and assignments not clear.
 - #16 Getting frequent spot fires across the line.
- Common Denominators
 - #1 On relatively small fires or deceptively quiet areas of large fires.
 - #2 In relatively light flashy fuels such as grass, herbs, and light brush.
 - #4 When fire responds to topographic conditions and runs uphill.
 - #5 Critical burn period between 1400 hours and 1700 hours.
- Hospital liaisons play a vital role in injury treatment. Their primary responsibility is to ensure that the patient’s needs and medical requirements are clearly conveyed to all parties involved. This coordination helps everyone remain updated on treatment status, any necessary accommodations, and/or any follow-up actions required.

PHOTOS/SITE DIAGRAMS/MAPS



Figure 4: Photo reflecting the initial treatment site for HTC1.

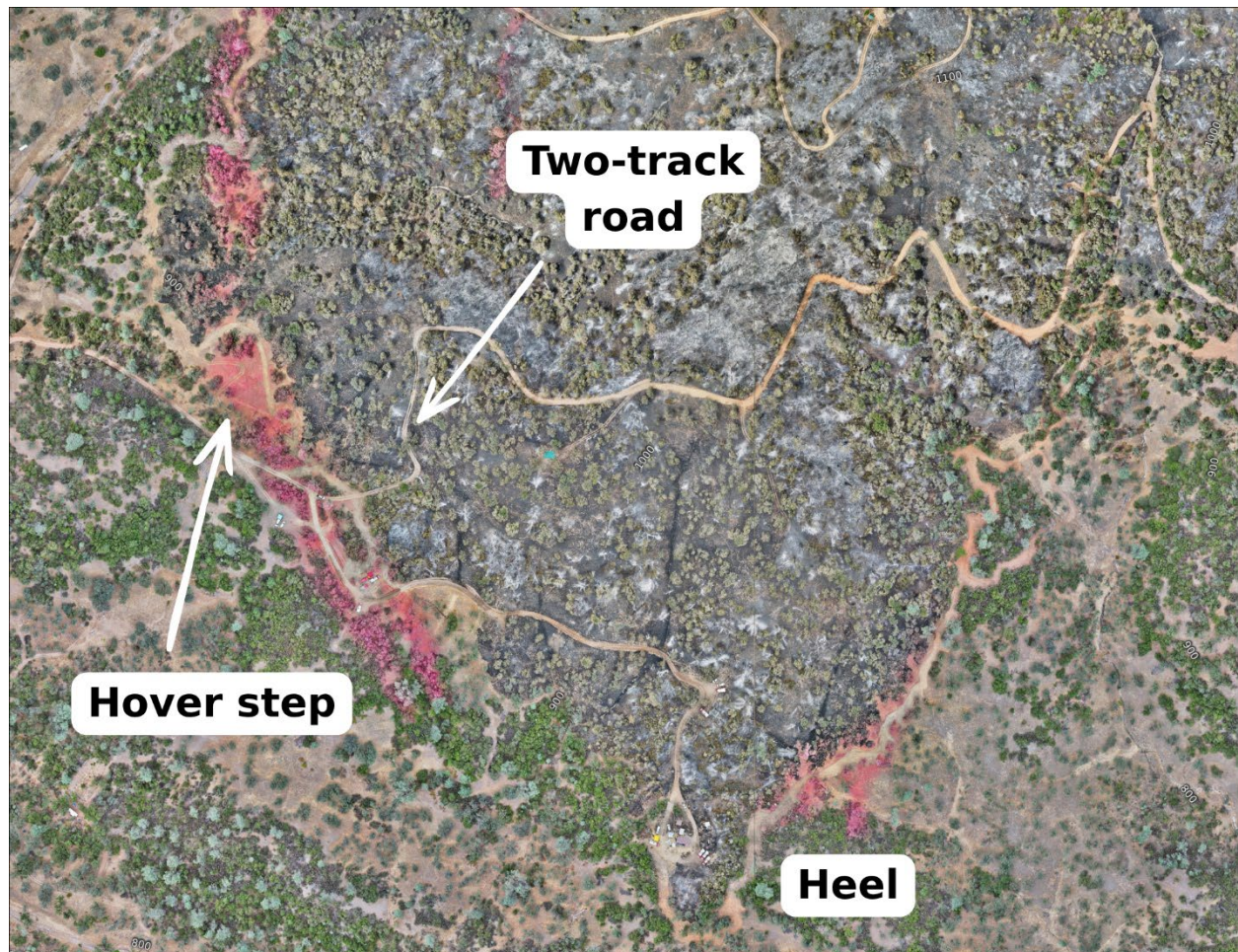


Figure 5: Wide overview of incident.

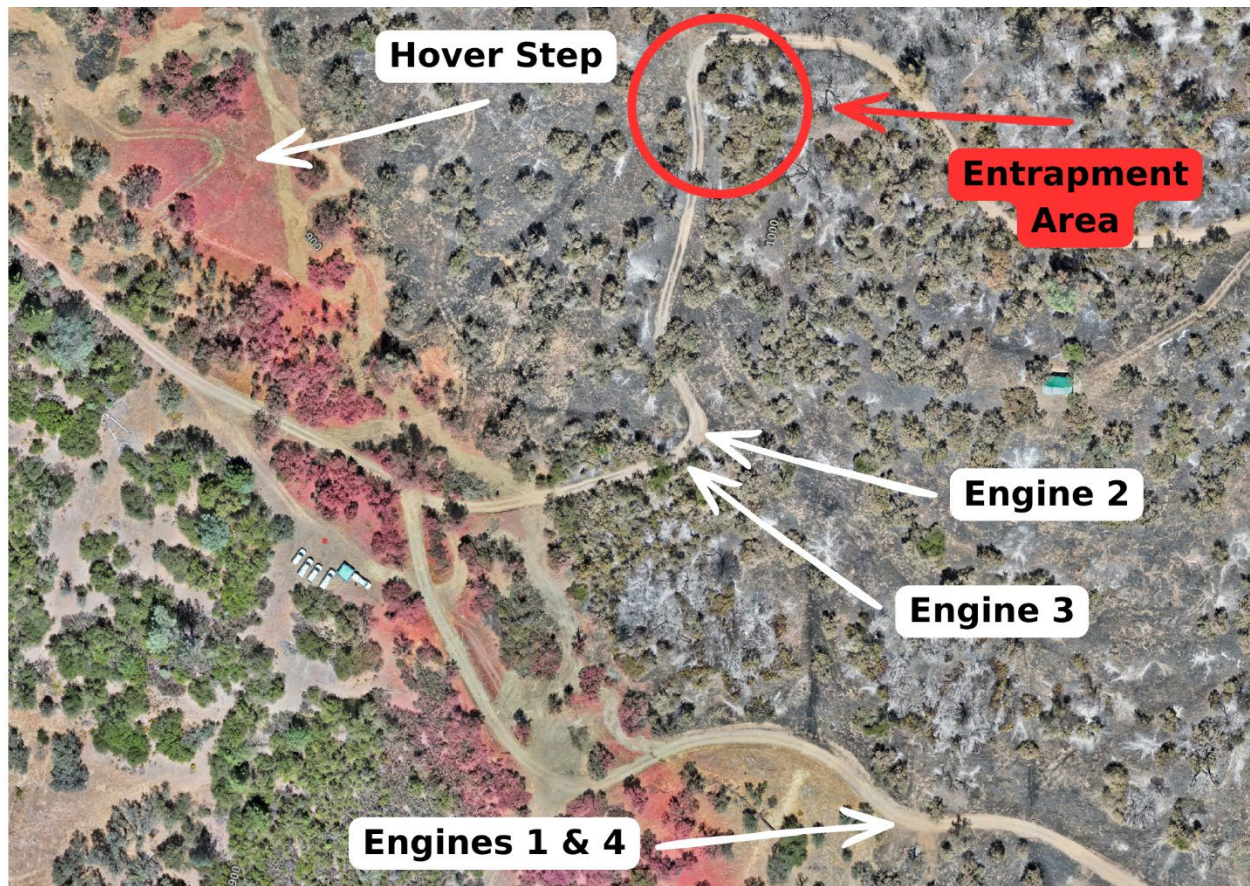


Figure 6: Detailed view of incident and entrapment site.



Figure 7: Overview of escape route for HTC1.