



United States
Forest Service

Mt. Hood National Forest
Pacific Northwest
Geographic Areas

16400 Champion Way
Sandy, OR
97055

File Code: 6730

Date: September 15, 2026

Route To:

Subject: 72 Hour Report

To: US Forest Service Pacific Northwest Geographic Area Leadership

THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION IS PRELIMINARY AND SUBJECT TO CHANGE

Location: Austin Fire, Mt. Hood National Forest

Date of occurrence: 9/9/2026

Time of occurrence: 1330

Activity: Fire Suppression – Tree Felling, Saw Operations

Number of fatalities: 1

Narrative: On the afternoon of 9/9/26, a member of a contract Falling Module assigned to the Austin fire was critically injured while conducting hazard tree mitigation. The sawyer was cutting a snag, when the top portion broke off, fell back toward him and struck him in the head and back.

Adjacent fire fighters and emergency medical resources assigned to the Austin fire responded quickly to provide advanced life support care on scene and facilitate the medivac transport to Legacy Emanuel Medical Center in Portland, OR. Unfortunately, the injured sawyer did not survive his injuries and was pronounced deceased at the hospital.

Critical incident stress management, peer support and related mental health resources will continue to be provided to those that have been impacted by the incident.

An interdisciplinary team of subject matter experts are coming together to conduct a Facilitated Learning Analysis or FLA. The team will be onsite in the coming days to examine events leading to this fatality incident, the associated response and what can be learned from this tragic outcome to improve firefighter safety going forward.

Meta Loftsgaarden
Forest Supervisor
Mt. Hood National Forest

cc: Sarah Fisher, Erin Phelps, Monte Ulmer, Shane Jeffries



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