

File code 6730

Subj: 24-Hour Report of Gwen Soltis Fatality, Inyo National Forest

To: Tom Mills
Jack Blackwell

Location: Inyo National Forest
Mt. Whitney Ranger District
Jordan Hot Springs, Golden Trout Wilderness
Tulare County, CA

Date: Saturday, July 19, 2003

Time: 0400-0430

Team Leader: Gwen Soltis

Mission: Post McNally Fire erosion control and trail rehabilitation

Activity: Victim was asleep in her tent.

Number injured: none

Number of fatalities: 1

Property damage: one tent destroyed

Narrative: A 4-person trail crew, lead by Gwen Soltis, was engaged in post McNalley Fire erosion control and trail rehabilitation, working in the Jordan Hot Springs area of the Golden Trout Wilderness. The crew began their tour on July 15, 2003, and was scheduled to complete the tour on July 24, 2003. On July 19, 2003, between 0400 and 0430, a 40" diameter, approximately 136 foot tall, dead Jeffrey Pine tree fell and struck the victim while sleeping in her tent. The tree did not show signs of any fire damage, but apparently had root rot. The wounds to the victim suggest that she succumbed to her injuries instantaneously.

The preliminary investigation indicates that the crew had current Job Hazard Analysis, communication and evacuation plans in place. The crew used them effectively.

Maribeth Gustafson
Team Leader

Cc: Dick King
Caroline Deaderick
Randy Draeger