



TO :

FROM : National Wildfire Coordinating Group

REPLY TO : NWCG@nifc.gov

DATE : 08/22/2011

SUBJECT : SAFETY BULLETIN : TFS Prelim 24-Hour Report_Bowles Creek Bottom Fire

Attached is the 24-Hour Report for the Bowles Creek Bottom accident/investigation which occurred. Please see that it receives wide distribution within your agency. When available, other investigation documents, specifically the 72-Hour Report and the final Factual Report, will be posted on the Wildland Fire Lessons Learned Center database for incident reports and lessons learned analyses (<http://iirdb.wildfirelessons.net/main/Reviews.aspx>)



TFS Prelim 24-Hour Report Bowles Creek Bottom Fire .pdf



Preliminary (24 Hour) Report

The following information is preliminary and subject to change

Location: Fire # 384 (Rusk County), Texas; Approx. 10 miles west of Henderson
Aka: Bowles Creek Bottom Fire

Date of Occurrence: Thursday, August 18th 2011

Time of Occurrence: Approx. 1650

Accident Team Leader: Brad Moore SOF2

Mission: Providing support for initial attack operations

Activity: Supporting/Constructing Fireline

Number of injuries: 0

Property Damage: Total loss of Type-6 engine

Narrative: While supporting fireline construction on a wildfire near Henderson, Texas, a USFS Ford F-550 Brush Truck Unit, consisting of an Engine Captain and two operators, were cut off from their safety zone due to the brush unit becoming stuck in marshy soil conditions. Fuels consisted of heavy grass and brush. The unit was near the rear of the fire when the truck became stuck. A significant wind direction change and speed increase, produced by thunderstorm activity, occurred at approximately 1630hrs which caused the fire to move toward the vehicle. The Engine Captain determined the safest course of action was to relocate their vehicle. He was unable to free the unit because it had become bogged down while crew was working spots. A JD-450 dozer unit was in the vicinity and tried to pull the unit to safety but was unable to free the vehicle. The crew attempted to re-start the pump but the smoke was too thick and the unit would not crank. The only alternative was to leave the unit and reach a safety zone by foot.

The three members of E-5187 were unharmed but the brush truck is a total loss.

Cc: Frank Wofford, Frank Bruno, Garry Parton, investigative team members;
Mark Stanford, FRP Associate Director - Texas Forest Service