

BRIDGER-TETON NATIONAL FOREST

SEARCH AND RESCUE PLAN

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BRIDGER-TETON NATIONAL FOREST

SEARCH AND RESCUE PLAN

Background

Forest involvement in search and rescue is increasing as public use of National Forest lands increases. Requests for search and rescue assistance often come on weekends or after normal work hours, with the requesting party expecting immediate answers and actions. Forest Service employees must be knowledgeable of their authority and responsibility, the resources available, and of procedures established for dealing with search and rescue on National Forest lands. Responsibility for costs and liabilities incurred during the emergencies must be understood.

Forest Service Manual 1599, Search and Rescue Operations (Appendix G) provides national policy direction for SARs on National Forest Lands. This plan tiers to the Forest Service policy, providing local on-the-ground direction.

Purpose and Scope

The County Sheriff has the responsibility for search, rescue, and emergency medical activities within their respective county, regardless of landownership. The Forest Service role is one of cooperation and support of the County Sheriff.

This document provides Forest protocols for search, rescue, and emergency medical search and rescue (SAR) operations on the Bridger-Teton National Forest (BTNF). Grand Teton National Park Rangers and other National Park Service medical providers may be requested and assist with County operations on Forest lands. Grand Teton National Park has a separate SAR plan that addresses policy and protocols for DOI employees.

In those cases where immediate action is necessary to prevent further injury, suffering, or death, an on scene Forest Service employee may initiate incident response and temporarily assume a leadership role, until the County Sheriff's Department transitions. This lead role will be interim in nature and will be turned over to the County Sheriff's Department as soon as their personnel are available to take command on scene.

Memoranda of Understandings (MOU) will be signed by the BTNF and each County Sheriff. These MOUs will describe the coordination needs and communication expectations between the BTNF and the counties.

Connection to Related BT Plans

The **Bridger Teton National Forest Emergency Medical Services Program** supports the Forest's emergency medical providers through an integrated EMS system. This begins with physician medical oversight and continues with initial and ongoing training of the providers; certification; integration into local, regional, and national EMS systems; protocols; documentation and Quality Assurance program; and culminates in providing optimal patient care.

The Bridger-Teton will develop a local **Critical Incident Stress Management (CISM) Guide** in 2012. The guide will provide direction for assisting the Forest following a fatality or other event that can have serious long-term adverse effects on the agency, its employees and their families and the community

Responsibilities

County Sheriff – Refers to the Sheriff of the County in which the SAR is located.

The County may request logistical assistance from the Forest Service in terms of personnel, equipment and/or supplies. This assistance can include the use of Forest Service communications systems, qualified personnel, transportation equipment, maps, aerial photos, etc, and is at the discretion of the Forest Supervisor and District Rangers.

The County Sheriff's Department is responsible for determining areas of limited access, logistical support (including air SAR operation), and for the safety of all personnel involved.

Non-Federal aircraft (including life flight) requested by the county will be the responsibility of the County Sheriff. Unless the aircraft and pilot(s) are specifically carded for use by Department of Agriculture or DOI employees, Bridger-Teton employees will not fly in the aircraft. Forest Service personnel may assist in loading and other tasks under the direction of a county employee and/or life flight crew.

Federal aircraft requested by the county may be utilized if the county agrees to pay all costs of the aircraft, including flight time, per diem, extended pilot and fuel servicing vehicle costs. Federal contracted aircraft will be under the supervision of a federally qualified aircraft manager and will operate under all applicable contract regulations. Aircraft requests will be made through Teton Interagency Dispatch Center (TIDC), as described in Appendix C.

The appropriate Forest Service Special Agent or Law Enforcement Officer should receive copies of reports as available from County Sheriff's Departments regarding serious injuries or deaths on the National Forest. Serious injuries or deaths will be reported to TIDC who will notify the Forest Supervisor.

Forest Service – Refers to the USDA Forest Service Employees and Teton Interagency Dispatch Center

TIDC will notify the appropriate County any time an incident is initially reported to TIDC. Information will include location, type of incident, and Forest Service point of contact if Forest personnel are on scene. A sample information form is included in Appendix D. TIDC will be responsible for notifying the contacts listed in section 4 (Procedures).

For SAR operations that are expected to last longer than one operational period, involve multiple jurisdictions, or that involve a fatality, the Forest Service will designate a line officer to act as Agency Representative.

If deemed necessary to reduce suffering or save lives, the Forest Service may initiate a SAR operation and take an interim leadership role. The Forest Service will notify TIDC. The Forest will maintain the leadership role for the incident until the Sheriff's Department can transition and assume command. Actions taken may range from requesting the necessary assistance to administering emergency first aid. Once incident leadership has transitioned to the County, Forest Service personnel will be under supervision of the County IC, unless a unified command has been established.

At the Sheriff's request, the Forest may assist the Sheriff with SAR operations on the Bridger-Teton Forest. The Agency Representative will determine if the request is appropriate and if the Forest Service can meet the request. Forest Service employees assisting the county will abide by Forest Service regulations and will not participate in SAR activities when they do not have appropriate training.

In the event of a death, the Forest Service will not disturb the site until contact has been made with the County Sheriff or Coroner. Forest Service employees will not release witnesses or injured parties until the Sheriff has been notified and clears the release.

Forest Service employees may assist with National Park Service initiated SAR operations if requested by the Grand Teton National Park through Teton Interagency Dispatch.

Specific Forest Roles and Responsibilities

Forest Service Agency Representative (AREP)

The Forest Service will provide an agency representative for major SAR incidents expected to last more than one operational period, involve multiple jurisdictions, serious injury or fatality. The District Ranger or their designated acting will normally fill this role; in the event the Ranger or their designated acting is unavailable, the Forest Supervisor will fill that position.

The AREP will coordinate with the Incident Commander (IC). This coordination may be most effective if the AREP is at the Incident Command Post.

The AREP role will be to assure the safety of Forest Service employees involved, provide requested logistical assistance to the Sheriff, and ensure that unwanted resource impacts are minimized. This AREP will determine the need to set up unified command with other jurisdictions to coordinate the SAR response.

The AREP will monitor Forest Service employees to determine if Critical Incident Stress Management (CISM) is indicated for involved Forest Service employees. The AREP will also determine if an After Action Review (AAR) is appropriate.

Teton Interagency Dispatch Center (TIDC):

TIDC will function as communications and procurer of resources for incidents within the Bridger-Teton National Forest. TIDC will maintain communications with the affected Counties.

Forest Public Information Officer:

The Forest Public Information Officer will coordinate with the Sheriff's Office on media releases and information requests. The Forest Public Information Officer will take the public information lead unless otherwise agreed upon.

Forest Fire Duty Officer:

The Forest Fire duty officer will be notified in the event that any significant fire resources are requested for assignment to a SAR during fire season. All requests for federal aviation assets must be approved by the Forest and Park Duty Officers.

Procedures

Initial Reporting

Reporting parties for all incidents on Forest Service lands will be directed to TIDC, who will compile and coordinate all initial responses.

TIDC will make the following notifications. Notification will include a brief description of the incident.

- Appropriate County Dispatch Office
- Forest Supervisor
- District Ranger
- FS Law Enforcement Officer
- Forest Public Information Officer
- Forest Safety Officer
- Winter Sports Administrator if accident is related to winter time sports activities (avalanche, snowmobile or ski area associated)
- Jackson District River Manager if river related (most likely Snake River)

Forest Supervisor will notify:

- Regional Forester or his/her acting

District Ranger will notify:

- Front liners and other District staff as appropriate
- Minerals staff, if accident is related or in the vicinity of oil and gas activity.

Forest Safety Officer will notify as appropriate:

- Regional Safety Officer

Actions to take until County assumes command

Forest Service employees on site should take the following actions while waiting for the County to assume command:

1. Notify TIDC with type of incident, location, if the injured lost party is a Forest Service employee on duty or a non- FS employee
2. Determine and inform Dispatch if there are any immediate needs.
3. Ensure scene safety (for themselves, other Forest Service employees on site, and the injured party)
4. Provide assistance and first aid/emergency medical care within their ability

5. If the involved party is a Forest Service employee, and the incident can be handled internally by the Forest Service then inform Dispatch who make a courtesy call to the appropriate County Sheriff/Dispatch.
6. Gather information and retain witnesses until County authorizes their release

Communications

Once the County takes responsibility for the incident, the County will determine the radio frequencies to use. The County may request temporary use of a Forest Service frequency if required.

Forest Service personnel assigned to a County Rescue will be provided the SAR frequencies that will be used on the incident. FS personnel will notify TIDC when they have arrived at the incident and are in communication with the incident organization.

County Dispatch offices may request TIDC to provide flight following for county requested aircraft and or life flight operations. Transfer of flight following responsibilities will be clearly understood and documented by both dispatch offices.

Forest Service/Interagency Resources

Requests for Forest Service and Interagency resources, in addition to those initially assigned by the District Ranger, will be placed through TIDC utilizing the Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) form in Appendix F.

The Forest Service and the County provide financial protection in case of injury or death to their respective employees only. Forest employees must be within pay status to qualify for such protection, including workmen's compensation. Protection available to Forest employees who volunteer emergency service outside of pay status is limited to their personal insurance. Compensatory time is considered as being within pay status. Annual leave taken to volunteer is not pay status.

Motorized and Mechanical Use in Wilderness and Non-Wilderness

Wilderness SAR Operations

Wilderness approval for motorized or mechanized use, "including measures required in emergencies involving the health and safety of persons within the area" [Section 4 (c) of the Wilderness Act] is required.

Use of any other motorized or mechanized equipment by the county for rescues including but not limited to helicopters, ATV's, or any other motorized equipment must have prior approval by the Forest Supervisor

Approval authority for motorized or mechanical transport within Wilderness rests with the Forest Supervisor (FSM 2326.1) Approval may be given for emergencies "*where the situation*

involves an inescapable urgency and temporary need for speed beyond that available by primitive means.”

Non-Wilderness SAR Operations

The Bridger-Teton also has designated areas of non-motorized use outside of wilderness. SAR operations conducted by federal, state, or local officers or members of an organized rescue force are specifically exempted from these travel restrictions. Counties will notify TIDC or the Forest liaison when motorized operations are planned or carried out in these restricted areas.

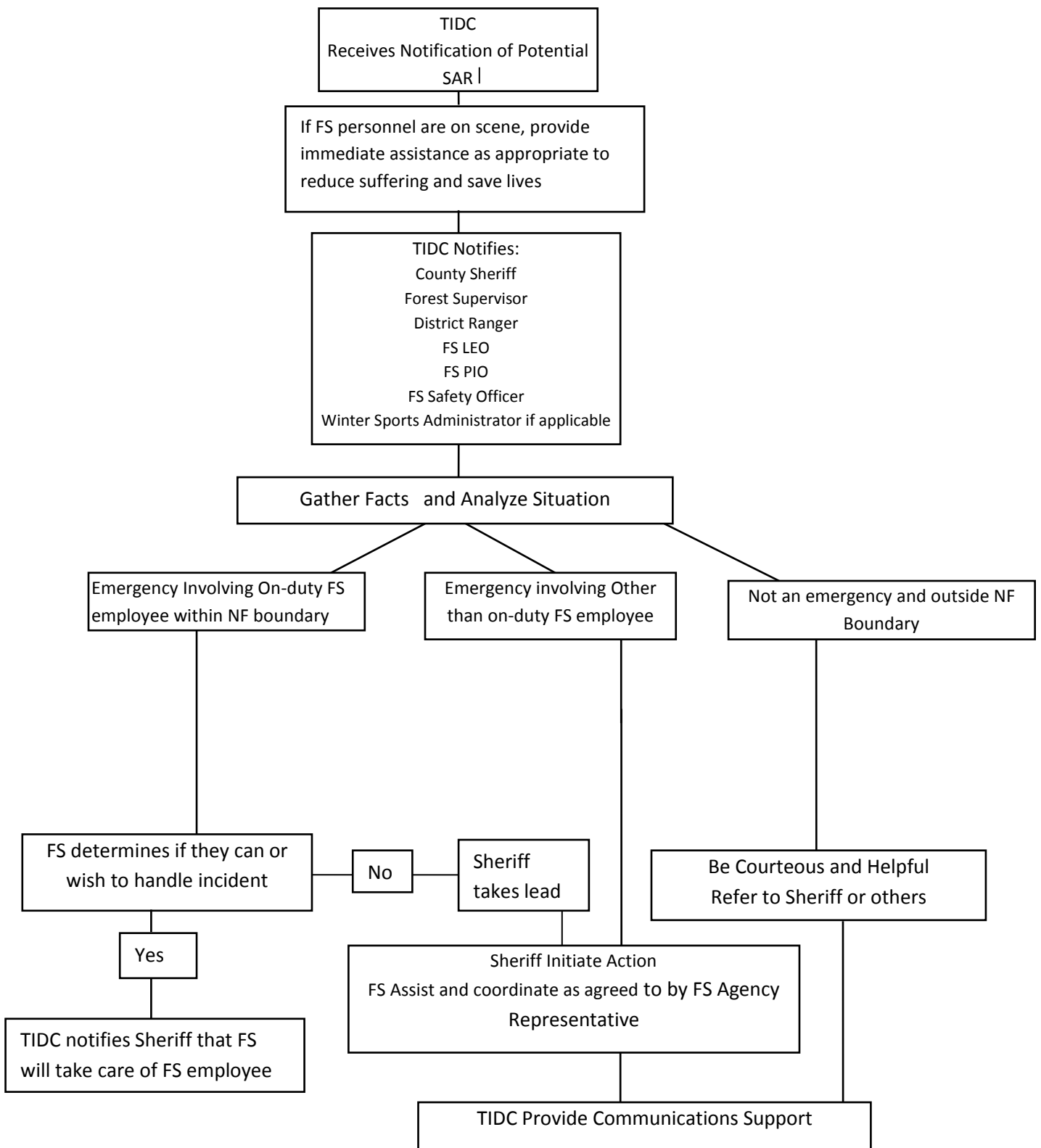
APPENDIX A: Directory

(All Area Codes are 307 unless otherwise listed)

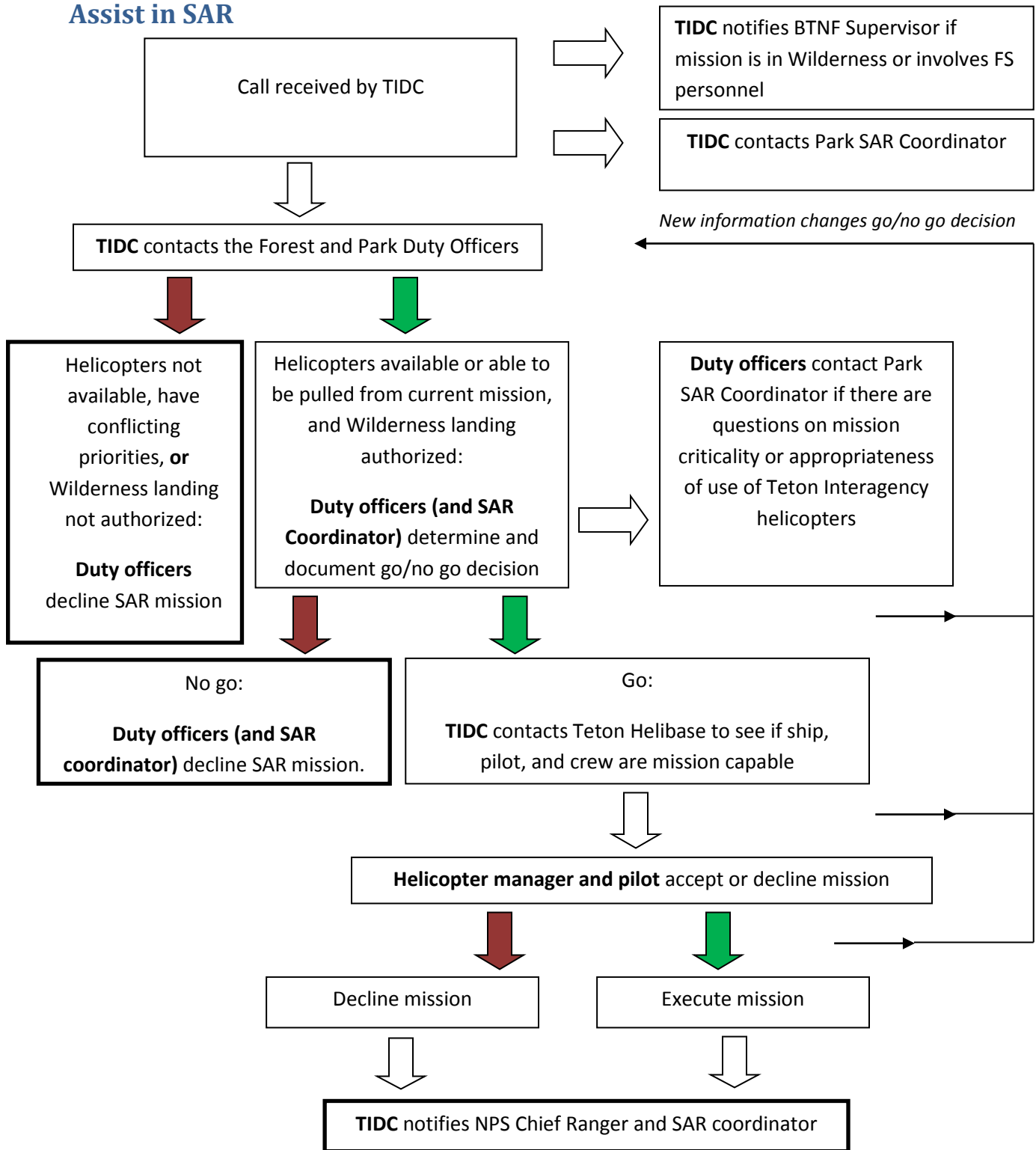
Title	Name	Work	Cell
Forest Supervisor	Jacque Buchanan	739-5511	575-644-9678
Deputy Forest Supervisor	Jose Castro	739-5509	413-2018
Forest Safety Officer	Mark Edinger	739-5550	
Forest Fire and Aviation Officer	Tobin Kelley	739-5576	413-2028
Deputy Forest Fire Management Officer	Andy Norman	739-5571	413-2033
Teton Interagency Dispatch Center	Dispatch	739-3301/3630	
Teton Helibase	Operations	739-5557	
Helitack Supervisor	David Gomez	739-5572	413-4209
Helitack Supervisor	Steve Markason	739-5551	413-2032
Kemmerer District Ranger (D1)	Tracy Hollingshead	828-5110	413-0380
Big Piney District Ranger (D2)	Vacant	276-5810	
Greys River District Ranger (D3)	Adam Mendonca	886-5310	413-2043
Jackson District Ranger (D4)	Dale Deiter	739-5410	413-2136

Buffalo District Ranger (D6)	Tom Matza	543-3910	413-6402
Pinedale District Ranger (D7)	John Moore	367-5710	
North Zone LEO	Vacant		
South Zone LEO	Phalen Whitehair	367-5729	413-2139 or 2042
East Zone LEO	Adam Dale	886-5332	699-1990
Supervisory LEO	Travis Tippit	208-524-7642	208-313-7769
Winter Sports Administrator	Ray Spencer	739-5415	413-2046
Teton County Sheriff's Office	Dispatch	733-2331	
Lincoln County Sheriff's Office	Dispatch	886-5231	
Sublette County Sheriff's Office	Dispatch	367-4378	
Wyoming Highway Patrol	Dispatch	1-800-442-9090 or 733-3869	
Teton County SAR	Doug Meyer	733-4052	413-0445
Sublette County SAR (Tip Top)	Jason Ray	367-2849	360-6927

APPENDIX B: Search and rescue flow chart



Appendix C: Outside Agency Request for Teton Interagency Helicopter to Assist in SAR



APPENDIX D: Medical incident size-up card

Medical Incident Size Up Card		
Patient Location:		
Location Description:		Lat/Long:
Patient Information:		Time of Injury:
Age:		Person making assessment:
Sex:		
Weight:		
Description of Injury/Illness (Mechanism of Injury/Chief Complaint):		
1. Airway:		6. Lost Consciousness:
Patent Compromised		No Yes Unknown
2. Breathing:		7. Skin Color:
Normal with a rate of: _____/min		Normal
Labored with a rate of: _____/min		Pale Flushed/Red
Not breathing		
Rescue breathing in progress		
3. Pulse:		8. Skin Moisture:
Present with a rate of: _____/min		Normal Moist/Clammy
Taken at: neck or wrist		Dry
Absent		
CPR in progress		
4. Bleeding:		9. Skin Temperature:
Not bleeding Oozing		Normal/Warm Cold
Squirting Running		Cool Hot
Location of bleeding: _____		10. Pupils:
Control measures:		Equal and reactive Dilated
Direct pressure		Unequal Constricted
Pressure bandage		
Hemostatic agent		
Tourniquet		
Control measures working:		11. Level of Medical Provider with Patient
Yes		WFR EMR
Partially (slowing not stopped)		EMT Paramedic
No		Other
5. Level of Consciousness:		12. Gear with Provider
Alert and oriented to:		1 st Aid Kit
Person		BLS Kit
Place		ALS Kit
Time		
Event		
Responsive to verbal stimulus		
Responsive to pain stimulus		
Unresponsive		
		13. Transport Request:
		Walk out/crew transport
		Carry out – non-critical
		Air Transport – non-critical
		Carry out – critical
		Air transport - critical
		14. Other Info:

APPENDIX E: Guidelines for EMS response

GUIDELINES FOR EMS RESPONSE

Definitions of medical capability

BLS - Basic Life Support: Includes multimedia first aid, advanced first aid, and Emergency Medical Technician (EMT) training.

ALS - Advanced Life Support: Includes advanced EMT, paramedic and/or GTNP Rangers and/or Teton and Sublette County Search and Rescue Teams.

GUIDELINES

On National Forest system lands that comprise much of the Northwest part of the State of Wyoming, EMS response takes longer and, if only basic life support is initially dispatched and upon arrival it is determined that advanced life support is needed, the time factor until arrival of ALS may be a serious element in the outcome of the patient.

These guidelines are intended to help those concerned with EMS response.

The following are examples of situations that should, if possible, have ALS field care:

1. **Serious trauma** - Examples include patients with head and spinal injuries, chest injuries, blunt or penetrating abdominal injuries, and fractures of large bones, e.g., femur (thigh) and pelvic bone fractures, full or partial amputations, etc. Patients in shock include: (1) weak, rapid pulse, (2) cold, clammy skin, (3) low blood pressure, (4) altered mental status, and (5) restlessness. However, a patient's compensatory reactions immediately after an accident may delay shock i.e., the patient with serious injuries may **not** have a rapid pulse or decreased blood pressure. But when the compensatory mechanisms no longer compensate sufficiently, the patient may suddenly show signs of shock and may later die of shock.

Patients with serious head injuries are usually unconscious or semiconscious or have some disorientation, loss of memory, etc. The patient with a skull fracture, particularly a depressed skull fracture, may evidence this injury to someone trained to assess it; but, in some cases, heavy bleeding from the scalp wounds obscures this. In any situation involving a serious head injury, spinal injuries should be automatically considered. In some instances, a serious head injury may not be evidenced until after some time delay. For example, a closed head injury may not be evident until increased intracranial pressure (ICP) builds up due to bleeding within the skull. When the pressure, after a period of time, has built up, the patient begins to lose consciousness, will not react to stimuli, etc.

2. **Cardiac/Respiratory Conditions** - Patients with cardiac/respiratory conditions may exhibit some or all of the following signs and symptoms:

Respiratory difficulty
Chest pain
Pain in jaw, down arm, back, etc.
Nausea, Vomiting
Cold, Clammy skin (sweating)
Sudden collapse
Weak, rapid pulse

Patients with cardiac/respiratory problems may suddenly go into cardiac arrest, or cardiac arrest may occur after the person has been experiencing cardiac/respiratory difficulties for some time. In cardiac arrest, a patient has no pulse or respiration. CPR (cardiopulmonary resuscitation) must be initiated immediately. Prolonged CPR in the wilderness has a very low chance of survival, especially after 20-30 minutes. Termination of resuscitation after this point may be considered in conjunction with medical responders and their medical control.

3. **Unconscious Patient - Unknown Cause** - The unconscious patient, from unknown causes, may have a head injury, a drug overdose condition, or a diabetic coma or be in shock due to a bleeding ulcer, ruptured aneurysm, etc.

4. **Miscellaneous Conditions** - Other conditions that may necessitate ALS include:

Anaphylactic shock/severe allergic reactions, e.g., bee stings, etc.
Cerebrovascular accidents (CVA's) or strokes
Drug overdose
Poison ingestion, inhalation, or skin absorption
Serious burns
Premature birth/high-risk mothers/infants

APPENDIX F: MOA for helicopter services

This form is to be completed by Teton Dispatch and faxed to the requesting County. The County will sign and complete, and forward back to Teton Dispatch. The form will be given to the NPS Budget Office for reimbursement from the general 1463 code that has been assigned for the AMD23 Helicopter Payment Documents. Helitack will apply this general 1463 code to the payment documents. No County flight will take place until this agreement is mutually processed.



United States Department of the Interior
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

GRAND TETON NATIONAL PARK
P. O. DRAWER 170
MOOSE, WYOMING 83012

IN REPLY REFER TO:

MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT

Your request for helicopter services is being considered. The following information is required before we can fulfill the mission request.

The undersigned agrees to reimburse Grand Teton National Park for the following services:

Date of Service: _____

Short-haul Operations;

includes helicopter flight time, availability time, personnel time, personnel overtime, fuel truck mileage, any additional standby pay.

Rescue Operations;

includes helicopter flight time, availability time, personnel time, personnel overtime, fuel truck mileage, any additional standby pay.

Other:

includes helicopter flight time, availability time, personnel time, personnel overtime, fuel truck mileage, any additional standby pay.

Bill To: Name (Print): _____

Address: _____

City/State/Zip: _____

Phone/FAX: _____ DUNS #: _____

Requester's Signature

Administrative Officer/ Approving Official

To Be Completed by Grand Teton National Park:

Date / Time Approval Received: _____

APPENDIX G: Forest Service Manual reference

1599 - SEARCH AND RESCUE OPERATIONS. The Forest Service recognizes its public duty to render assistance in cases involving persons lost in the National Forest System and to transport persons seriously ill, injured, or deceased from the National Forest System lands to a point where the person or body may be transferred to interested parties or local authorities.

1599.01 - Authority. The payment of necessary expenses incurred in search and rescue operations is authorized by 16 U.S.C. 575:

"The Secretary of Agriculture is authorized in cases of emergency to incur such expenses as may be necessary in searching for persons lost in the National Forest and in transporting such persons seriously ill, injured, or who die within the National Forests to the nearest places where the sick or injured person, or the body may be transferred to interested parties or local authorities."

This statute imposes no duty, the breach of which would be actionable at law, on the Forest Service to search for and rescue persons lost in the National Forest. It merely authorizes the Forest Service to incur necessary expenses in search and rescue operations. The legislative history of the statute shows there is nothing to suggest that the reason for authorizing the Forest Service to incur expenses in search and rescue operations was to relieve States, counties, or other political subdivisions from undertaking, or participating in, search and rescue on National Forests. Congress did not contemplate that the Forest Service respond to every search and rescue situation on the National Forests. The letter from Acting Secretary R.W. Dunlap to Chairman McNary, Committee on Agriculture and Forestry, United States Senate, 71st Congress, stated:

"The class of cases this bill is designed to cover includes only those where forest officers are forced by circumstances to assume responsibility. On such occasions there is not time for delay; the officer must function immediately, the incurring of expenses for provision, horse hire, and the like, being one of his first actions. He should be clothed with unqualified authority to certify such bills to the designated disbursing officer for settlement from regularly appropriated moneys. A direct responsibility to render all reasonable aid under such circumstances unavoidably attaches to the Government, and accordingly provision certainly should be made for paying the expenses necessarily incurred in such undertakings from public funds."

The Acting Secretary's letter suggests that the Forest Service, while perhaps better qualified, would be only one of several available search and rescue organizations, both public and private. The letter states:

". . . the need for a law of this character is becoming more urgent annually. Each year brings an increasing number of visitors to forest areas seeking recreation and diversion, and in consequence more persons are lost in the mountains and more accidents occur. Almost invariably there is a strong public

demand that the local forest officers, who are public officials thoroughly familiar with the country and peculiarly fitted for such work, shall assume leadership in the relief or rescue activities. Failure to do so would cause strong public disapproval and resentment with very unfavorable reaction upon the work not only of the individual officer but of the Forest Service. There are, however, many instances where local residents or other forest visitors organize search or relief parties, the expenses being borne by the individuals personally, or paid by public subscription."

1599.02 - Objective. To render assistance in cases involving persons lost in the National Forest, transporting persons who are seriously ill or injured, or who die inside National Forest System lands, to the nearest place where the sick or injured person or where the body may be transferred to interested parties or local authorities.

1599.03 - Policy. The role of the Forest Service in search and rescue is one of supporting and developing strong local and State leadership. The local public authority, usually the county sheriff, is the agency with primary responsibility for the protection of life and property. Field personnel must continue to be responsive to the public needs as they involve these aspects, with emphasis toward supporting and cooperating with the local officials.

The Forest Service shall take a temporary lead role in any search and rescue emergency in which immediate and quick response will reduce suffering or save lives. The concept of closest forces must be used and the lead role maintained only until the predetermined local responsible authority is available to assume its leadership. After transferring the leadership role, the Forest Service shall assume a supportive role and provide assistance to the fullest extent possible.

When the Forest Service has assumed the lead role, direct expenses incurred shall be paid from Forest Service appropriated funds. Instructions covering overtime shall be followed whenever overtime is incurred in search and rescue missions (FSM 6153).

The above policy applies when the Forest Service has assumed a supporting role with the following exceptions:

1. Contract aircraft, when possible, shall be released to the responsible search and rescue agency, and payment for services rendered shall become the responsibility of that local agency.
2. When local lead agency requests volunteers from the Forest Service, the volunteers become agents of the local agency, and expenses are borne personally or by local agency.

The benefited party shall not be billed for costs that the Forest Service incurs during search and rescue missions.

There is no authority for expenditure of Forest Service funds to render search and rescue assistance to persons outside the exterior boundaries of the National Forest System. However, if a search starts inside the exterior boundaries of the National Forest System, it may extend to areas immediately outside these boundaries if the exigencies of the situation demand.

Full support and encouragement shall be given local agencies to cooperate and coordinate with the Air Force Rescue Coordination Center at Scott Air Force Base. The Forest Service shall not duplicate or compete with existing resources.

1599.04 - Responsibility

1599.04a - Department of Agriculture (Reserved)

1599.04b - Forest Service. The Secretary has delegated to the Chief search and rescue responsibilities in the National Forest System. The Fiscal and Accounting Management Staff, Law Enforcement Group, has been assigned search and rescue responsibilities in the Washington Office.

1599.04c - Regional Forester. Each Regional Forester will develop standards and guides necessary to coordinate with search and rescue activity in each Region.

1599.04d - Forest Supervisor. The Forest Supervisor shall develop search and rescue plans and provide guidance to the District Rangers. Search and rescue activities on experimental Forests shall be coordinated with the local Research administrator.

1599.04e - District Ranger. District Rangers are responsible for conducting search and rescue activities within established guidelines.