



Helitorch operation on the Mad Creek Fire in the Blowdown/Routt NF

IA 7/8/2001

Craig Interagency Dispatch Center

Year-end Report

November 2001

CRAIG INTERAGENCY DISPATCH CENTER 2001 YEAR END REPORT

Looking back at the 2001 fire season it seemed to be a relatively normal season. However, review of the statistics, indicated that it was actually an above normal year in many instances. Fire season started late in May and ended in late October. Local residents did not conduct as many prescribed fires as in the past, which kept our early and late season fires to a minimum. The Forest was extremely dry; resulting in several fires "coming to life" again several weeks after being declared out. Many times, holdover fires from lightning were not detected for days and in some cases weeks. This proved to be a problem throughout the season. Late spring the Center supported fire activity in the Southern Area with the mobilization of overhead. Throughout the rest of the season the Center supported fires in the Rocky Mountain Area as well as in the Northwest and Great Basin Areas filling orders for overhead, engines, and crews.

This past season the Center experienced 70 multi-fire days, with the maximum fires for one day at 28. The Center had 462 fires for 7572.5 acres (compared to 439 fires for 35,230 acres in 2000). Seven prescribed fires were conducted resulting in 2,870 acres. Eight fires were put into Wildfire Use status, which burned a total of 3,260 acres.

The Center supported 2 Type II and 12 Type III fires, and 2 Wildfire Use Teams. Expanded Dispatch was established the first part of July, operating until mid August. Two fires stand out among all of the others due to the long duration and uniqueness of those fires. The Ecklund Complex wildfire use fire started on July 17th and was called out the first part of October. It consisted of Ecklund, Davis, and a few other one-tree fires. The MMA encompassed four different jurisdictions (BLM, NPS, FWS, and private) burning a total of 2,927 acres. It burned primarily in the Diamond Breaks Wilderness Study Area and Dinosaur National Park. The Davis part of the Complex burn onto the Brown's Park Wildlife Refuge from the Diamond Breaks Wilderness Study Area. Two different Wildfire Use Teams were ordered to manage the Ecklund Complex. It was turned back to the local agencies to monitor about mid August. The Mad Creek fire, which burned 1,270 acres in the blowdown on the Routt National Forest, is also one that will live in infamy. It started on July 8th and was declared out on December 1. Three Type III Teams and a Type II Team have managed it. It has survived several drenching rain events adding to the complexity involved with suppressing it. Because the fire was located in the Mount Zirkel Wilderness area it presented several logistical challenges. Crews were spiked out and

supported by helicopters. An intricate helitorch operation was conducted to keep the fire contained within the blowdown area (resulting in some awesome pictures!) Several Fire Behavior Specialists were on hand to assist with the planning and implementation of that burnout. Both the Ecklund Complex and the Mad Creek fire received heavy media attention, necessitating the need for a Fire Information Officer to be located in the dispatch center for several weeks.

The dispatch center dealt with 737 incident actions which included wildfire suppression, prescribed fire support, wildfire use fire support, support of the wildhorse and wilderness programs, flight following for the USFS regional bug flight, processing of 93 flight requests, one search and rescue, public assists, and assisting with local, regional, and national training.

The National Fire Plan contributed to the success of finally being able to fully staff the dispatch center. This past year two additional permanent dispatch positions were filled. This has brought the staffing up to 5 permanent personnel in the dispatch center. In addition, a Computer Specialist was hired to support the fire organization in Craig. A Type 1 crew was also added to the Craig-Routt Fire organization coming on board mid-June. This training crew was dispatched 18 times (8 within the Craig Dispatch area and 10 outside of the area) for a total of 84 days. The Yampa Valley Interagency Crew was dispatched 15 times (10 within the Craig Dispatch area and 5 outside of the area) for a total of 74 days. A type 3 helicopter was brought in on an ABC Misc order in mid July. It was kept on into September on severity.

The center is planning on remodeling this winter, expanding the Initial Attack area (which will include an additional radio console) and providing space for the additional dispatchers. The expansion of Initial Attack will allow the center to more evenly distribute the workload, decrease the congestion occurring on the radio frequencies, reduce the noise level in Initial Attack, and provide more space for the support functions.

Craig Interagency Dispatch Center Motto for 2001 fire season:

"When we are convinced that the world has gone mad, we don't have to follow suit."

Fuels and Weather 2001

The Energy Release Component (ERC) is used as an indicator of fire season severity. As an index, ERC traces seasonal weather trends that effect moisture levels in dead fuels. The ERC is less responsive to short term weather fluctuations and is a more stable indicator than other indices and relates well to dryness in fire weather and forest fuels.

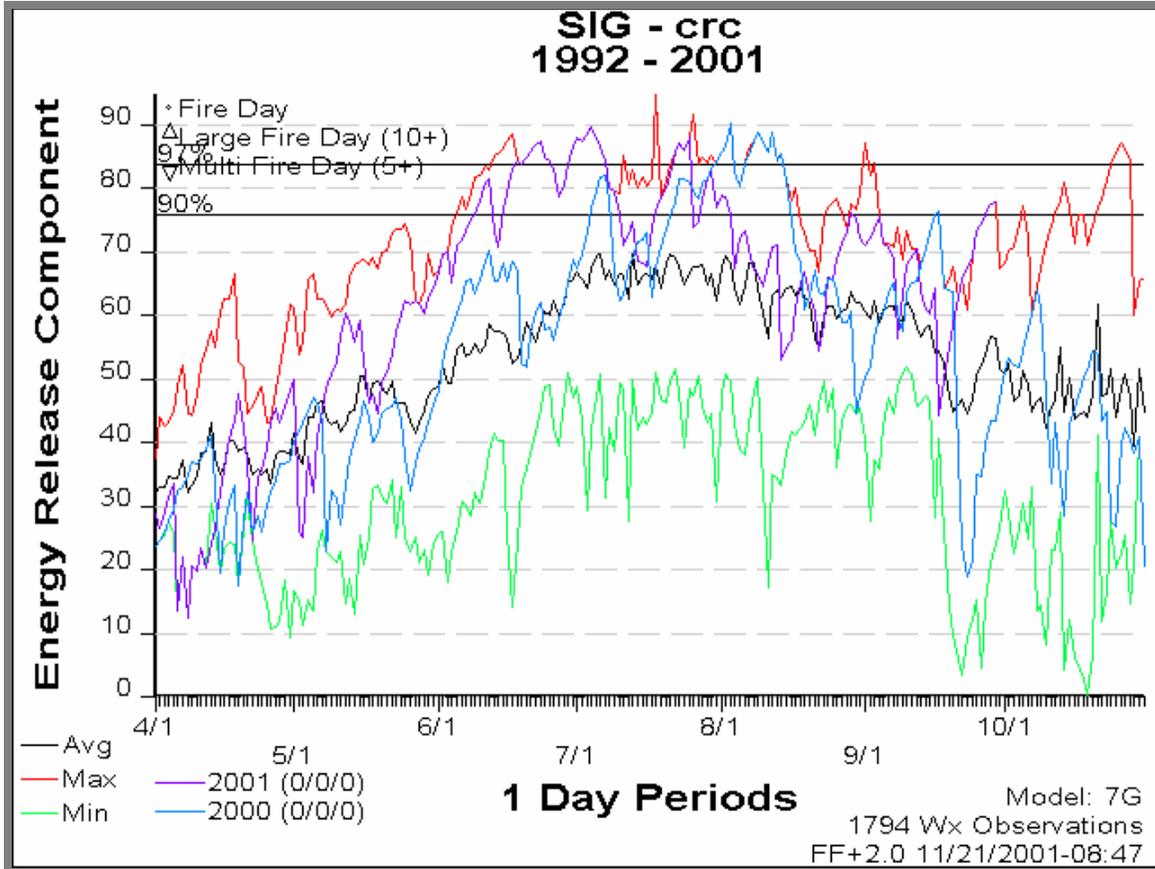
The ERC comparison chart displays the ERC index for the fire season of 2001, as well as for the fire season of 2000. Conditions are portrayed for 90th and 97th percentile weather conditions(drought and severe drought respectively) using weather data for the years 1992 through 2001. An annual filter of April 1st through October 31st was used and depicts a typical fire season on the Routt National forest. When these seasons are compared we see that the previous fire season of 2000 had 54 days at or above the 90th percentile and 2001 had 47 days at or above the same level.

Although the number of days conducive to burning were similar between the two seasons compared; the ERC was higher earlier in the 2001 fire season and peaked mid-June to mid-July. This is approximately one month earlier than the 2000 fire season. ERC record highs and 1000 hr. fuel moisture record lows occurred during this early season time period. Dead fuel moisture weighed samples showed 6% recorded in mid-June. This was due predominately to the winters below average snow pack and the rapid spring run-off with little wetting rains. Live fuel moistures of 80% in spruce and 105% in lodgepole pine were recorded during this period, which are below benchmarks in fuel moistures that indicate active or extreme fire behavior.

Western Colorado was under the influence of an unsettled monsoon flow during a predominant part of the past fire season. This created high-pressure ridges that were hot and dry, which alternated with the monsoon flow that created ignition sources from lightning in typically high based, dry thunderstorms.

Benchmarks were reached in both ERC's and recorded fuel moistures on the forest side of the Craig/Routt Center(CRC). Fuel moistures, both live and dead, were dry in the early part of the 2001 fire season and accounted for the heavy than average occurrence on the forest. Five human caused fires for a total of 6 acres and 30 lightning fires for 1281 acres were recorded on the Routt National Forest during the 2001 fire season.

ERC April through September, 2001

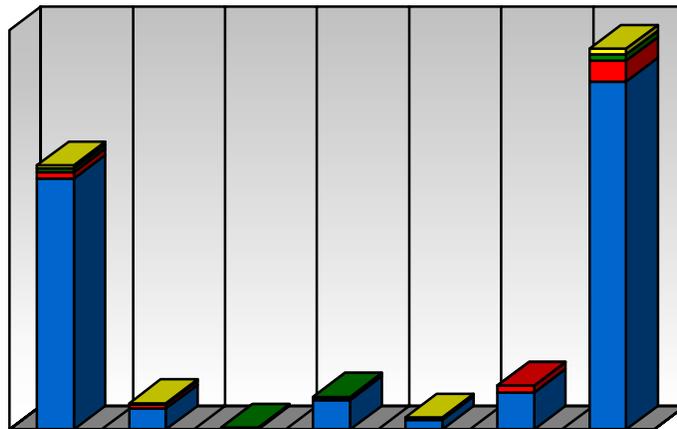


CRC 2001 Fuels Projects

Project	Agency	Unit	Burned Acres	Mechanical Acres	Total Acres
Big Duck	BLM	WRD	370	50	420
E. Douglas	BLM	WRD	650		650
Lobo/China Wall	BLM	WRD		119	119
Texas Mtn	BLM	WRD	30		30
Great Divide	BLM	LSD			
Oak Ridge	DOW/BLM	WRD	760 DOW 40 BLM		800
Long Park	USFS	Yampa	100		100
Lower Camp Creek	USFS	Parks	715		715
East Zone Piles	USFS	Parks	N/A		N/A
Central Zone Piles	USFS	HP/BE Yampa	N/A		N/A

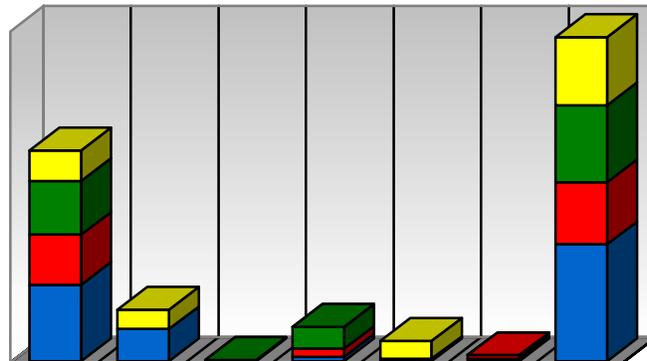
CRC Fire Statistics

Number of Fires By Type and Agency



	BLM	USFS	FWS	NPS	State/ DOW	PVT	Total
■ RX	4	2	0	0	1	0	7
■ WFU	5	0	1	2	0	0	8
■ Human	8	5	0	2	2	9	26
■ Lightning	314	26	1	37	12	46	436

Acres Burned by Type and Agency



	BLM	USFS	FWS	NPS	State/ DOW	PVT	Total
■ RX	1295	815	0	0	760	0	2870
■ WFU	2285	0	50	925	0	0	3260
■ Human	2109	2	0	346	34	140	2631
■ Lightning	3231	1358	0.5	181	59	112	4941

2001 CRC Fire Statistics Summary

	Lightning	Human	RX	WFU
BLM				
# fires	314	8	4	5
acres	3231	2109	1295	2285
USFS				
# fires	26	5	2	0
acres	1358	2	815	0
NPS				
# fires	37	2	0	2
Acres	181	346	0	925
FWS				
# fires	1	0	0	1
acres	.5	0	0	50
State/DOW				
# fires	12	2	1	0
acres	59	34	760	0
Private				
# fires	46	9	0	0
acres	112	140	0	0

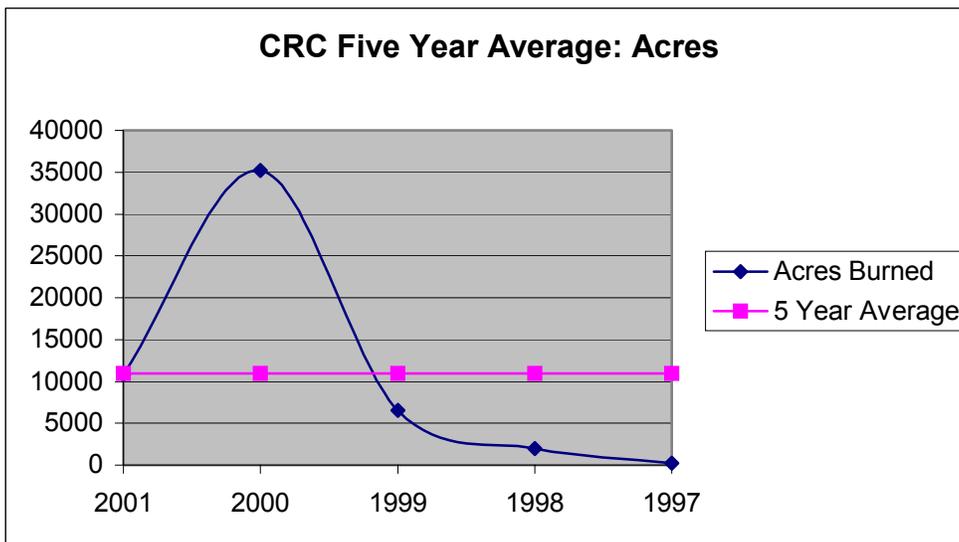
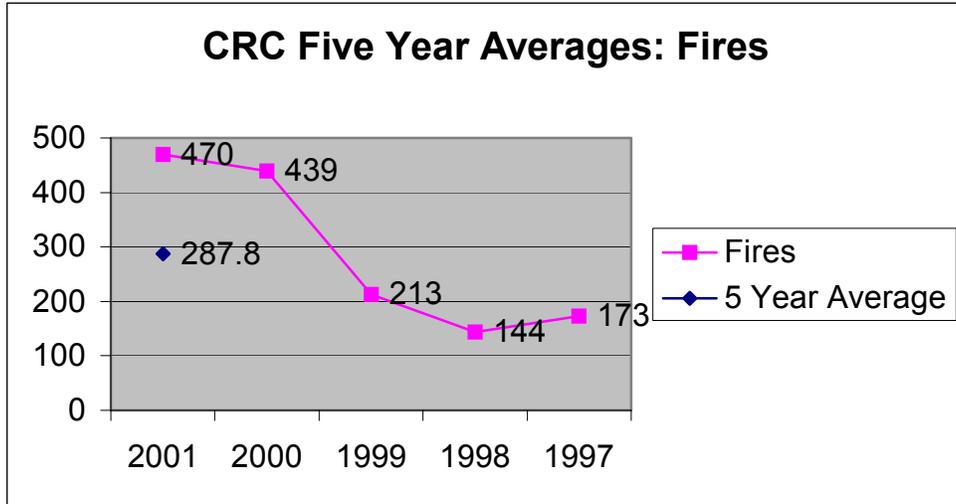
	Lightning	Human	RX	WFU
Total Fires	436	26	7	8
Total Acres	4941.5	2631	2870	3260

Total Number of Wildland Fires: 462

Total Wildland Fire Acres: 7572.5

CRC Fire Statistics Summaries

All Agencies



Routt National Forest
Fire Statistics
2001

District	Human		Lightning		Total		RX Acres	
	Number	Acres	Number	Acres	Number	Acres	Number	Acres
Parks	0	0	5	69.7	5	69.7	1	715
Yampa	1	1.5	7	3.5	8	5.0	1	100
HP/BE	4	.4	14	1284.4	18	1284.8	0	0
TOTAL	5	1.9	26	1357.6	31	1359.5	2	815

Ten-Year Average

Year	Human		Lightning		Total		RX Acres	
	Number	Acres	Number	Acres	Number	Acres	Number	Acres
2000	10	102	22	44	32	146	0	0
1999	2	1	5	1	7	2	1	80
1998	3	15	3	1	6	16	2	145
1997	0	0	4	1	4	1		
1996	7	2.6	9	28.1	16	30.7		
1995	0	0	4	1	4	1		
1994	5	76	28	252	33	328		
1993	8	9.4	4	.6	12	10		
1992	5	261.2	12	221.8	17	483		
1991	13	11.3	9	2.2	22	13.5		
10 Year Average					15.3	103.12		

Craig Interagency Dispatch Center Resource Order Statistics

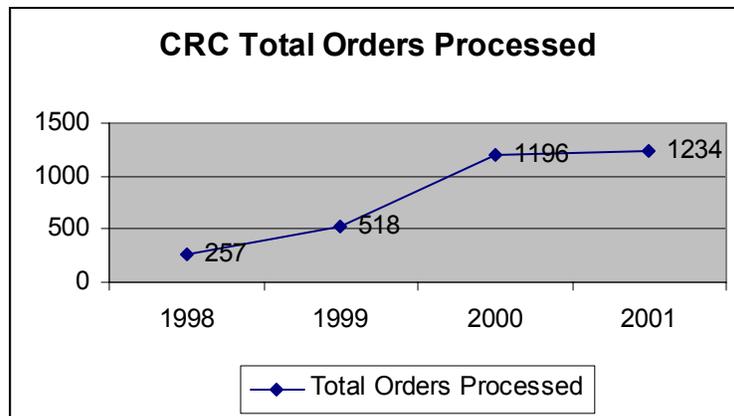
Resource Requests Processed by CRC

Order Type	# Processed in 2001	% Increase Decrease from 2000	# Processed in 2000
Overhead	559	+52%	265
Equipment	291	-46%	542
Crews	118	-11%	132
Aircraft	266	+3%	257
Total	1234	+ 3%	1196

*Included UTF (Unable To Fill) orders which were substantially lower in 2001 due to RMC using availability lists before placing orders.

**As of this report we're still processing orders for the Southern Area.

***Does not include Supply orders.

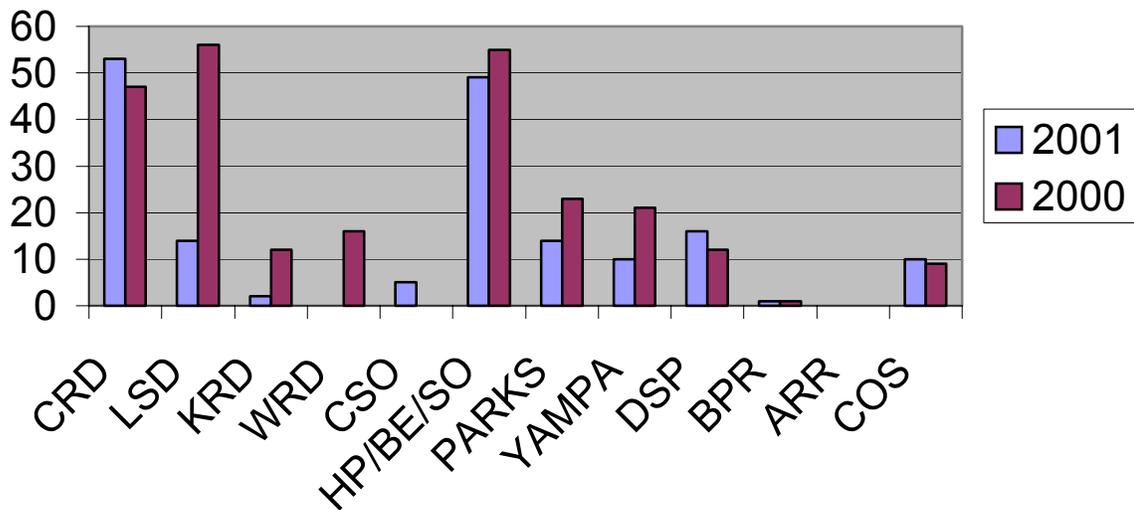


Overhead Resource Order Summary

Agency Participation on fire assignments

Agency	Unit	Orders Filled 2001	Orders Filled 2000
BLM	CRD	53	47
	LSD	14	56
	KRD	2	12
	WRD	0	16
	CSO	5	*
USFS	HP/BE/SO	49	55
	PARKS	14	23
	YAMPA	10	21
NPS	DSP	16	12
FWS	BPR	1	1
	ARR	0	0
STATE	COS	10	9

Overhead Participation by Unit



Crew Resource Order Summary

Crew Type	Orders Filled	Orders UTF
Type 1 and Trainee	71	2
Type 2	46	0
Camp	1	
Total Crew Orders	118	

Craig Hotshots Type 1 Trainee Crew

The Craig Hotshots were on fires for 84 days on 18 assignments, 10 out of region.

Yampa Valley Interagency Type 2 Crew

The Yampa Valley IA Crew had 15 fire assignments. Two assignments were out of region and three were out of the CRC Dispatch Zone. They had 74 days on fires.

Historical Crew Usage in CRC Zone (Includes local and visiting crews)

Year	Number of Crews	Number of Days
1995	10	40
1996	37	146
1997	1	5
1998	17	83
1999	23	Not Available
2000	71	228
2001	93	342

* Note change in length of assignment from 21 days to 14 days beginning in 2000.

Aircraft Resource Order Summary

CRC processed 269 aircraft orders on 73 incidents, and 93 additional flight requests.

Aircraft Type	Orders Filled
Air Attack	24
Air Tanker	48
Type 2 Helicopter	14
Type 3 Helicopter	64
Lead Plane	22
Single Engine Airtanker (SEAT)	19
Smokejumper	13
Other (Frequencies, etc)	65
Total	269

