RAWLINS INTERAGENCY DISPATCH CENTER



2011 ANNUAL REPORT

**Introduction to the Center**

Rawlins Interagency Dispatch Center is hosted by Bureau of Land Management’s High Desert District. The center is located in Rawlins, WY. Rawlins is a town of 9,700 people located off Interstate 80 in the middle part of the lower half of Wyoming. We provide services for seven counties, four BLM Field Offices, Wyoming State Forestry, National Park Service, and Fish and Wildlife Service.

Our staff includes one Center Manager (which was filled after an eleven month vacancy), one Assistant Center Manager (which has recently been vacated), one career-seasonal Initial Attack Dispatcher, and one career-seasonal Logistics Dispatcher. During the summer months we hire 1 to 3 seasonal dispatchers. This year we had two seasonal dispatchers.

The dispatch zone covers approximately 21 million acres in the state of Wyoming. 48% of this land is owned by the Federal Government (approximately 10 million acres). A large percent of High Desert District is checkerboard due to the Union Pacific Railroad that runs through Southern Wyoming. This type of land ownership is cause for a multiple agency response to incidents throughout the District.

**Overview of the 2011 Fire Season**

The 2011 fire season started off slow. Colorado and Texas were busy starting in March. The Center sent many of its resources to the fires in Colorado and Texas. The first reported fire in the District was in Laramie County. Antelope Draw was originally reported to Casper Interagency Dispatch on 04/01/2011 and then the call was given to Rawlins. This fire burned approximately 600 acres in grasslands on privately owned property and no BLM response was needed.

The Center continued to send resources to assist with large fires in Colorado. On April 15th, planning began for the Marking Pen prescribed burn. After the weather conditions settled, the burn began on 05/02/2011. Personnel included High Desert District, Carbon County, City of Rawlins, Craig BLM, and the Medicine Bow National Forest. The spring portion of Marking Pen burned 2,500 acres.

Brown’s Spring prescribed burn was started on 05/06/2011. Personnel included High Desert District, Craig FS, Teton, Worland, and Sweetwater County. 250 acres were burned for this project.

The fire season picked up in late June and continued through late September with a few smaller fires reported in October. Not many red flag warnings or watches were issued this year and the warnings that were issued were mainly for north Albany County. Flooding was a big issue this year in the early spring and fuel moistures remained high for quite a period of time. Several cutting projects were in progress this year as well as other projects such as sage grouse, wild horse, and fencing.

**Fire Activity**

The 2011 fire season consisted of 117 wildfires for a total of 5,910.9 acres burned. This year’s total acres are slightly higher than the 5 year average of 4093.73 acres. This year’s total fires are slightly higher than the 5 year average of 110 fires per year. The breakdown of fires is as follows: 40 lightning caused for 4898.31 acres and 77 human caused for 1012.6 acres. The center had also received 54 smoke checks which were determined to be previously reported fires, adjacent centers, or false alarms.

**Notable Fires**

**Antelope Draw** was reported on 04/01/2011 in Laramie County. Antelope Draw burned 600 acres of grass North of Cheyenne. All private land and there was request for BLM assistance.

**Cottonwood Fire** was reported on 05/03/2011 in Sublette County. Cottonwood burned 162.5 acres on private land and no BLM response was requested.

**Ghost Town** was reported on 06/07/2011. It is reported here not because of size (0.82 acres) but because of historical significance. Ghost town burned down historical shearing pens that were in Carbon County since the late 1800’s. The construction of this building was spectacular as it was built of hardwood and there are no hardwoods located in Carbon County. This site will be missed.

**Brooks** was reported on 08/17/2011 in Sweetwater County. Brooks burned 291 acres on BLM and private lands. This fire had suppression units from High Desert District, Sweetwater County, and Craig. There was one single engine air tanker and one air attack on this fire.

**South Pennock** was reported on 08/25/2011 in Carbon County. South Pennock burned 374 acres and was run as a unified command with BLM and Forest Service. Suppression units were Saratoga Forest Service, Carbon County Fire, and High Desert District. One air attack also assisted on this fire.

**Christnick** was reported on 08/30/2011 in Albany County. Christnick burned 2,670 acres. High Desert District, Canyon City, Craig, Wyoming State Forestry, Albany County, and several other agencies assisted on this fire.

**Ferris Mountain** was reported on 09/21/2011 in Carbon County. Ferris Mountain burned 1,398 acres. High Desert District, Carbon County, Craig BLM, Medicine Bow Nation Forest - Laramie, NIFC IR Flight, Wyoming State Office, BLM Unaweep Wildland Fire Module – Grand Junction, and Big Horn FS assisted with this fire that was in a Wildlife Management Area with multiple objectives.

**2011 FIRE STATISTICS**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **UNIT** | **HUMAN** | **LIGHTNING** | **PRESCRIBED** |
|  | **FIRES** | **ACRES** | **FIRES** | **ACRES** | **FIRES** | **ACRES** |
| **High Desert District** | 12 | 20.60 | 25 | 4892.40 | 4 | 3980.00 |
| **HDD Counties** | 62 | 989.10 | 15 | 5.90 | 0 | 0 |
| **Seedskadee** | 1 | 0.50 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| **Fossil Butte** | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| **Cokeville** | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| **Wyoming State Forestry** | 2 | 2.40 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| **TOTALS** | 77 | 1012.60 | 40 | 4898.30 | 4 | 3980.00 |
| **5 YEAR AVERAGE** | 57.6 | 1719.46 | 52.8 | 2374.27 | N/A | N/A |

TOTAL NUMBER OF FIRES: 117 TOTAL NUMBER OF ACRES: 5910.9

NOT ALL COUNTIES REPORT THEIR FIRES, COUNTY NUMBERS MAY NOT BE ACCURATE

The pie graphs show resource orders brought into the district and sent off district. These numbers include resource management as well as fire incidents. The numbers shown include resources from BLM, Forest Service, Fish and Wildlife Service, State of Wyoming, and County.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **TYPE OF INCIDENT** | **NUMBER OF INCIDENTS** |
| **WILDFIRE** | 117 |
| **STRUCTURE FIRE** | 1 |
| **VEHICLE FIRE** | 3 |
| **SMOKE CHECK** | 56 |
| **MEDICAL AID** | 1 |
| **PUBLIC ASSIST** | 2 |
| **LAW ENFORCEMENT** | 1 |
| **MISCELLANEOUS**  | 181 |
| **PRESCRIBED FIRE/CUTTING** | 12 |
| **AIRCRAFT DOWN** | 1 |
| **RESOURCE ORDERS**  | 110 |
| **HAZMAT** | 1 |
| **SEARCH AND RESCUE** | 2 |
| **AIRCRAFT** | 98 |
| **TOTAL** | **586** |

**NOTE:** The aircraft down was a private aircraft at the Saratoga Airport that Carbon County responded to. The structure fire was a Carbon County call.

**WEATHER**

In 2011 there were only 14 Fire Weather Watch/Warnings issued beginning on August 7th and going through October 4th. Most of these were issued for Northern Albany County and to the East. Precipitation was fairly high for 2011 with flood warning issued throughout the District during the spring and early summer months.



|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Total Precipitation in Inches** | **April** | **May** | **June** | **July** | **August** | **September** | **October** |
| **Snow Spring Creek (Sweetwater County)** | .78 | 2.21 | 1.42 | .58 | .53 | .18 | .70 |
| **Dodge Creek (Albany County)** | 1.17 | 1.25 | 1.28 | .94 | .71 | .61 | .07 |
| **Muddy Creek (Uinta County)** | 1.79 | 3.08 | .22 | .62 | .38 | .74 | .72 |
| **Anderson Ridge (Sublette County)** | .19 |  | .52 | .19 | .28 | .58 | .36 |
| **Cow Creek (Carbon County)** | 1.47 | .91 | 1.33 | .97 | .49 | .59 | .35 |

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Average Monthly Temperatures (Degrees Fahrenheit)** | **April** | **May** | **June** | **July** | **August** | **September** | **October** |
| **Snow Spring Creek (Sweetwater County)** | 40 | 49 | 65 | 75 | 78 | 67 | 50 |
| **Dodge Creek (Albany County)** | 41 | 49 | 67 | 78 | 78 | 64 | 51 |
| **Muddy Creek (Uinta County)** | 40 | 53 | 69 | 80 | 83 | 72 | 56 |
| **Anderson Ridge (Sublette County)** | 35 | 45 | 61 | 75 | 76 | 65 | 48 |
| **Cow Creek (Carbon County)** | 41 | 52 | 69 | 77 | 81 | 70 | 53 |

**AIRCRAFT**

**BLM Contracted Type 3 Helicopter**

N173BH began its contract on June 19th. It was scheduled for a 90 day assignment, but due to late season activity on the High Desert District and elsewhere, it was extended for an additional 21 days.

During this time, 3BH flew a total of 155.2 hours with 154.2 of those hours being for fire assignments. 30.2 of the flight hours were spent on district while 125 hours were flown off district.

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**Aircraft Resources Ordered to HDD**

Several incidents required air operations to assist with fires in the High Desert District. The following table shows the types of aircraft and the numbers ordered for the fire season.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **TYPE OF AIRCRAFT** | **HOW MANY ORDERED** |
| IR Flight | 2 |
| SEAT | 7 |
| Air Tactical | 10 |
| Type 3 Helicopter (Not 3BH) | 3 |
| Type 1 or Type 2 Airtanker | 2 |
| Type 1 Helicopter | 1 |
| Lead Plane | 1 |
| Temporary Flight Restriction (TFR) | 1 |

**FUELS**

In 2011, dispatch documented 12 fuel’s projects.

Marking Pen Rx – Controlled Burn – 2500 acres

Brown’s Spring Rx – Controlled Burn – 250 acres

Dad Juniper – Mechanical Project

Camp Creek Rx – Controlled Burn – 180 acres

Simplot Power Line – Mechanical Project

Ferris Mountain (Cherry Creek) – Mechanical Project

Buckskin Basin – Mechanical Project

Scab Creek – Mechanical Project

Sweetwater Campgrounds – Mechanical Project

Shirley Mountain – Mechanical Project

Morgan Creek Rx – Controlled Burn – 350 acres

Iron Mountain Rx – Controlled Burn – 0 acres