

West Yellowstone Interagency Smokejumpers

2005 User Guide



West Yellowstone Smokejumper Base 406-646-7691
P.O. Box 610 West Yellowstone, MT 59758

Smokejumper Status Report On the NIFC Home Page,
www.nifc.gov/smokejumper/smjrpt.php

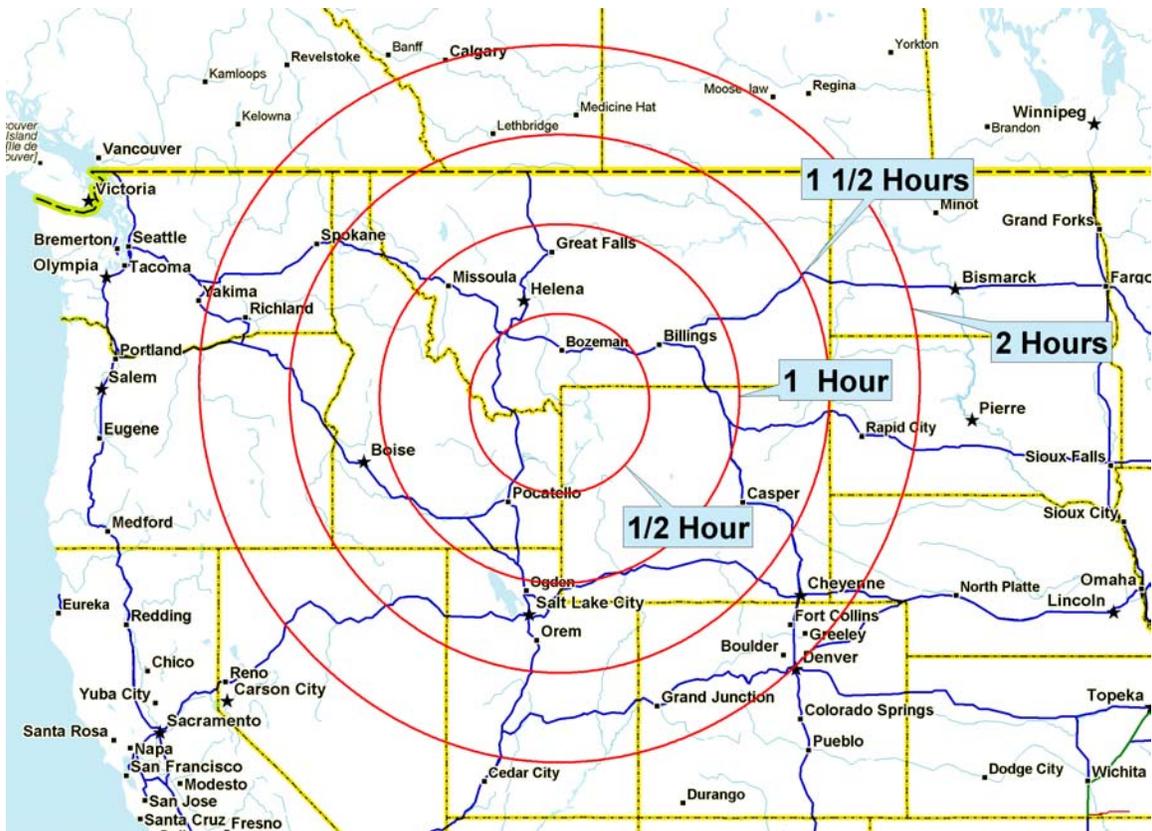
Copy of this guide on WYS homepage
<http://www.fs.fed.us/r1/gallatin/fire/wyifc/main.htm>

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Aircraft Response Map

-Each circle on the map represents $\frac{1}{2}$ hour of response time for the jumpship from West Yellowstone



Phone Numbers

Bozeman Dispatch 406-587-6719

Smokejumper Base 406-646-7691 (fax) 406-646-9598

Base Manager

Greg Anderson cell 406-640-1364

Asst. Base Manager

Jon Ueland cell 406-646-1365

Office Manager

Bill Colman cell 406-640-1362

Operations foreman

Charlie Wetzel cell 719-650-0848

"In order to be ready when needed, you must also be ready when not needed."

Purpose of This Guide

-The purpose of this guide is to provide land managers, coordinators, dispatchers and other users, information about the West Yellowstone Smokejumper program.

Mission Statement

-Our mission is to provide safe, professional and effective fire suppression and fuels reduction services to assist land managers in meeting objectives.

Program Overview

-Smokejumpers use fixed wing aircraft and parachutes to provide a long range, rapid response initial attack fire suppression resource.

-Smokejumpers primary mission is to provide initial attack firefighting capability and other fire management services to Forest Service, Park Service, BLM and other agency land managers.

-Twenty-Three smokejumpers are stationed at the West Yellowstone Interagency Fire Center.

-The national smokejumper program is set up to provide additional jumpers as resources are depleted in West Yellowstone

-West Yellowstone is one of nine smokejumper bases, seven Forest Service and two BLM, in the western U.S.

-In addition to initial attack, WYS smokejumpers can:

- Assist land managers with extended attack fire suppression and Wildfire Use.

- Fill a variety of ICS positions and can deploy as Type I hand crews and as ground or helicopter based initial attack modules.

- Deliver Fireline Explosive, blasters and crewmembers.

- Also smokejumpers can assist in Search and Rescue operations. The smokejumper aircraft can be used as a platform to help perform aerial search and jumpers can be deployed for search and backcountry rescue.

- Provide an aerial observer platform with the jumpship for fire detection.

- Smokejumper aircraft can also act as Air Attack until an ATGS arrives on the fire. They can provide up to the minute information such as fire size-up, fire behavior, etc. to dispatch or fire managers.

Coordination and Dispatch

-The use of smokejumpers is identified in district, state and national fire management plans. Communication among dispatch centers, coordination centers, fire management officers and smokejumper duty officers is vital to timely dispatch.

- By agreement, West Yellowstone Smokejumpers can be ordered directly through Bozeman dispatch by neighboring units (including Billings, Cody, Dillon, East Idaho, Great Falls, Helena, Miles City, NRCC (Missoula), Teton, and Yellowstone dispatch offices). Other users order through normal dispatching channels.

Fire Mission Outline

Placing the Order

-Smokejumpers are ordered for IA or pre-position in accordance with area and national mobilization guides.

-Pre-positioning is based on current and predicted fire activity.

-A standard smokejumper aircraft contains eight smokejumpers, one spotter and about one thousand pounds of firefighting equipment.

The Spotter

-Aboard each smokejumper aircraft is a smokejumper spotter who directs the mission. The spotter deals directly with the appropriate dispatch for flight following and mission coordination.

Fire Call

-When the fire call is received, smokejumpers suit up and the pilot starts the aircraft engines.

-The spotter receives basic information about the fire; general location, requesting office, radio frequencies and other resources responding.

En-route to the fire

-Flight following checks are made every 15 minutes. The aircraft travels roughly 50 miles every 15 minutes.

-Prior to arriving at the fire, the spotter will radio other aircraft and the ground contact.

Arrival at the Fire

-Upon arrival, the jumpship orbits the fire. The spotter advises dispatch and ground contact of arrival, gives a brief summary of fire status and makes recommendations about initial attack or other management options. The spotter can help ground forces locate the fire and determine the best access. The spotter is capable of monitoring airspace over the fire and if necessary can help direct lead planes, air tankers and helicopters until air attack arrives.

I.C. Selection

-The smokejumper spotter is responsible for selecting the I.C. before dropping smokejumpers, if an I.C. is not already on the fire. Jump loads are arranged so that, if one is available, a qualified ICT3 is on board every jumpship. The guidelines for selecting the I.C. are as follows:

-If the fire is challenging or difficult, or has high potential to become complex in terms of tactics, values at risk, or the number and variety of resources needed, the spotter selects the most qualified jumper on the aircraft to be the I.C.

-If the fire poses no special difficulties, the spotter may designate a less experienced (but still fully qualified) jumper as I.C. This provides the less experienced jumpers with I.C. experience, and is critical to the development of future leaders. The highest qualified I.C. will be prepared to take over the fire if complexity warrants.

The Jump

-Smokejumpers are usually dropped two at a time, but if the size of the jump spot and wind conditions warrant they may drop one at a time. A minimum of two jumpers will be dropped per fire.

-After dropping cargo, the aircraft climbs and reestablishes radio contact with dispatch. The spotter gives dispatch the name of the smokejumper in charge, the number of other jumpers on the fire, an update on fire status and can relay information from the I.C. to dispatch if necessary.

Fire Suppression

-The smokejumpers can fight fire for at least 48 hours without resupply. After 48 hours, a jumper crew may require resupply either by paracargo or by other means.

-Each smokejumper carries a hand-held programmable radio and a list of GYA and other frequencies and repeaters.

-Smokejumpers are equipped with chainsaws and can build helispots if necessary

-Jumpers can either stay till the fire is out or can be released when reinforcements arrive.

Fire Monitoring

-WYS smokejumpers are prepared to respond to remote areas to monitor wildland fires. The jumpers carry fire monitoring kits for collecting and recording accurate data. If the decision is made to suppress the fire, qualified personnel will already be on the scene to take immediate action.

Demobilization

-Smokejumper retrieval normally involves returning the smokejumpers and their gear to the jumpship location and is coordinated between the requesting dispatch and Bozeman dispatch.

-Usually there are personnel available at the jump base to assist in retrieval of jumpers
A smokejumper typically carries a large packout bag weighing about 100 pounds plus any chainsaws and other gear that was used on the fire.

-Following are typical smokejumper demobilization transportation requirements:

Vehicle retrieval

2 SMJs	1 standard cab pickup	(or) 1 van	(or) 1 Suburban
3-4 SMJs	1 six-pack pickup	(or) 1 van	(or) 1 Suburban
5-8 SMJs	1 pickup and 1 van	(or) 2 six-packs	(or) 1 pickup and 1 Suburban
9-12 SMJs	3 vehicles	(or) stake side truck plus vehicles for passengers	

Aircraft retrieval

-Pilots should be advised of smokejumper gear weights and bulk

Weights to use:

Approximately 180 lbs body weight per jumper

Approximately 110 lbs of gear

(1 large backpack per jumper plus possibly chainsaw(s), pump(s), etc.)

Paracargo

-As well as delivering smokejumpers, the jump plane can be used as a platform to deliver a variety of material to support fires or other projects. Uses include:

- Resupply of food and water for remote fire crews.
- Securely carrying fire line explosive from a guarded magazine to the site where it is needed with very little logistical support.
- Dropping feed for backcountry stock.
- Delivering building material for wilderness construction projects.

-Paracargo drops are ordered through dispatch.

WYS Smokejumper Prescribed Fire Operations

Availability

-Several West Yellowstone smokejumpers are available for prescribed fire assignments during the off season, generally October thru May. The jumpers can supply Ignition Specialists, Holding Specialists, Fire Effects Monitors, Crewmembers and various other ICS positions. They can also assist managers in writing burn plans, performing site preparation work and in performing mechanical hazardous fuels reduction work.

Ordering and Coordinating

-Requesting WYS jumpers for off season prescribed fire projects requires a phone call to West Yellowstone Smokejumper Operations (406-646-7691) to coordinate the specifics of the project with the personnel available.

On the Assignment

-Smokejumpers will arrive at the project location fully equipped with government credit card, tools, radios, equipment, transportation, food, camping supplies and/or other materials necessary to complete the project. Resupply may be necessary on extended projects.

Physical Fitness Standards

-Every WYS smokejumper maintains an arduous physical fitness rating.

General Information

Smokejumper Duty Officer

-The smokejumper duty officer, located in West Yellowstone, serves as the focal point for smokejumper operations.

-The duty officer acts as liaison between the WYS jumper organization and dispatch, keeping informed on scheduling, days off, availability and current location and status of jumpers assigned to West Yellowstone.

This information is also updated at least daily on the NIFC Smokejumper Status Report web page at <http://www.nifc.gov/smokejumper/smj rpt.php>

Smokejumper Availability

Mid January

-Trainers, managers, loft technicians and others begin hiring and preparing for the season. Some jumpers are available for prescribed fire and other fuels management projects.

Mid April

-Early refresher training takes place in Missoula for about half of the jumpers. Others are available for non-jumping assignments.

Mid June

-Rookie training and late refresher training in Missoula takes place for new hires and the rest of the jumpers who didn't go to early training. Jump plane comes on contract for West Yellowstone.

Late September

-Normal end of fire season. WYS jump plane goes off contract. Most jumpers available for prescribed fire and other project work.

Aircraft

-The WYS smokejumpers contract a Dornier 228 (Jumper-13), capable of hauling 8 smokejumpers and their gear at a speed of 200 knots for an initial attack range of 400 nautical miles.

Administration

-During the fire season normal duty hours are 0900-1800

-Coordination centers or local units can authorize extended staffing when necessary.

-WYS smokejumper time and attendance is handled by the office manager in West Yellowstone. Smokejumpers are covered by a season-long fire travel authorization. All jumpers are prepared to cover their individual travel expenses.

Emergency Medical Services (EMS) Program

-The jumpers are capable of providing emergency medical services for injured firefighters and others. Each smokejumper aircraft carries EMS personnel (EMTs, Wilderness responders and people trained in Advanced First Aid and a complete medical trauma kit deliverable by Paracargo to the accident scene.

-In the event West Yellowstone (or Missoula) smokejumpers must provide medical aid, the First Aid Person in Charge may need to relay information to a consulting group of physicians in Missoula at St. Patrick's Hospital Emergency Room (406-329-5635). This exchange can usually be accomplished via cell or satellite phone, but possibly information will need to be relayed through the jumpship, dispatch or a lookout tower. Most Region 1 dispatch offices should have copies of the standard MSO/WYS Smj Injury Information Form to help smooth the information transfer to the hospital. A copy of this form is available on the WYIFC web page, <http://www.fs.fed.us/r1/gallatin/fire/wyifc/main.htm>

-Any medivac transportation needs will be coordinated through normal dispatch channels.

Proficiency Jumps

-Parachute jump currency ensures that smokejumpers maintain proficiency in parachuting skills and procedures. A parachute jump (either fire or training) every 10-14 days is standard to maintain currency. Ability to meet this standard is predicated upon aircraft availability and fire activity. The spotter will clear proficiency jumps through the appropriate dispatch channels.

After Action Review

-Mission debriefings are critical to improving mission effectiveness and safety. Smokejumpers perform debriefings after every mission. Participation by host fire personnel is encouraged.