

# WENATCHEE VALLEY RAPPELLERS



Thank you for your interest in the Wenatchee Valley Rappel Crew. The Wenatchee Valley Rappelers are a wildfire initial attack and large fire support crew. We employ 27-35 people with 1 Base Manager, 2 Helicopter Managers, 3 Assistant Managers, 4 Lead Crew Members, 4 Senior Rappelers, and various GS-4 and GS-5 Temporary Seasonal Firefighters. There are four exclusive use helicopters located at the rappel base. The crew utilizes one helicopter as rappel platform regionally and nationally, one is an initial attack/short-haul platform(2015), the third is utilized primarily as a forest resource, the fourth is a large fire support resource. Recent fire seasons have taken the rappel crew to New Mexico, Arizona, Utah, Colorado, Florida, Nevada, North Carolina, California, Idaho, Montana, Oregon, and Texas. The crew averages 40+ rappel fires a year.

The primary mission of the regional helicopter is Initial Attack, while the National helicopter handles large fire support supplemented with Initial Attack assignments. From year to year the Okanogan-Wenatchee National Forest also contracts a forest helicopter, which is utilized to support large fires and initial attack within forest protection areas. The helicopters also do a variety of projects from staffing lookouts, rappelling to constructing helispots, and flying sling loads of bricks and bridge material for trail work.

We have GS-4 and GS-5 level seasonal positions to fill with trained and experienced firefighters. At a minimum, recruits shall have at least one season working for a resource management agency working exclusively in fire. Competition is high for these positions and most individuals hired have more than five seasons in fire and have a self motivated mind set. Desired qualifications for Temporary employees are ICT5 and FFT1.

Physical fitness and conditioning are absolute necessities for rappelling and fire suppression. We require that all employees meet rigorous levels of physical fitness. All employees are tested the first week and, **AT A MINIMUM**, are expected to meet the following physical requirements:

1 ½ Mile Run-	11:00 minutes or less
Pull-ups-	7 Full Extensions
Push-ups-	25 in 1 minute
Plank-	2 minute minimum
85#+ Pack Test-	Over typical terrain
WCT 45# Pack Test-	3 miles, 45 minutes

These are minimum requirements and the majority of the crew exceeds these minimums exponentially. Physical training will occur twice daily during the first three weeks of the season, and 1 to 1 ½ hrs daily for the rest of the year. All applicants should be able to exceed these minimum requirements. **WE CANNOT EXPRESS THE IMPORTANCE OF SHOWING UP IN GOOD SHAPE.**

<b><u>2014 Average</u></b>			
Pull Ups	Push ups	Plank	1 ½ Run
<b>13</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>4:50</b>	<b>9.14</b>

The season will begin around the last week of April. All employees will spend the first 4-5 weeks in a variety of required training including; Fire Refresher, First Aid/CPR, S-271

Interagency Helicopter Training, and Rappel Training. Other training is picked up during the season as time permits. The fire season generally winds down in late September however, most seasons run into October.

The Wenatchee Rappel Crew does not offer housing; however East Wenatchee/Wenatchee and surrounding areas offer plenty of housing. The average cost is \$700-\$1000 for a two bedroom one bathroom house. Apartments range from \$500 and up for a one bath, one bedroom place. Crewmembers will often get a larger house together to help keep costs down.

We are located at Pangborn Memorial Airport in East Wenatchee. The surrounding area offers great recreational opportunities such as hiking, riding, and climbing. The Wenatchee and Okanogan area is also home to abundant rivers and lakes for fishing, boating, rafting and kayaking.

The crew was started in 1971 after the Wenatchee National Forest burned more than 130,000 acres in 1970. The crew used a Bell 205, and had 10 crewmembers with a 9 person back up squad. In 1972 the crew was comprised of Bell 205 and 10 crewmembers. In 1973 the program became rappel capable, and rappelled through 1982. The Forest opted not to rappel from 1983-1987, but a helitack crew remained in Chelan. In 1987 the Forest reinstated rappelling and the crew grew to 14 crewmembers. In 1995 the rappel crew staffed one of the eight National Type 2 helicopters. The crew has since grown to 27-32 people. In 2000, the rappel crew moved from Chelan to East Wenatchee and became the Wenatchee Valley Rappel Crew. Then in 2003 the crew moved into a permanent facility located behind the Wenatchee Fire Cache at Pangborn Airport. The building facilitates the Wenatchee Valley Rappel Crew, Radio Shop and Central Washington Interagency Communications Center (CWICC).



If you are interested in applying for a seasonal position with the Wenatchee Valley Rappel crew you can apply online at [www.usajobs.gov](http://www.usajobs.gov). Competition for positions on the rappel crew is very high. If you are seriously interested it would be to your advantage to mail a copy of your resume to the Wenatchee Valley Rappellers. The following announcement numbers will assist you in applying for our temporary employment.

Duty location is East Wenatchee, WA.

**USAJOBS.gov**

**GS-04 Forestry Technician (Fire Suppression)** Series/Grade/Tour: GS-0462-04; Temporary 1039

**GS-05 Forestry Technician (Helitack)** Series/Grade/Tour: GS-0462-05; Temporary 1039

**\*\*This new announcement number is effective as of October 1, 2015\*\***

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