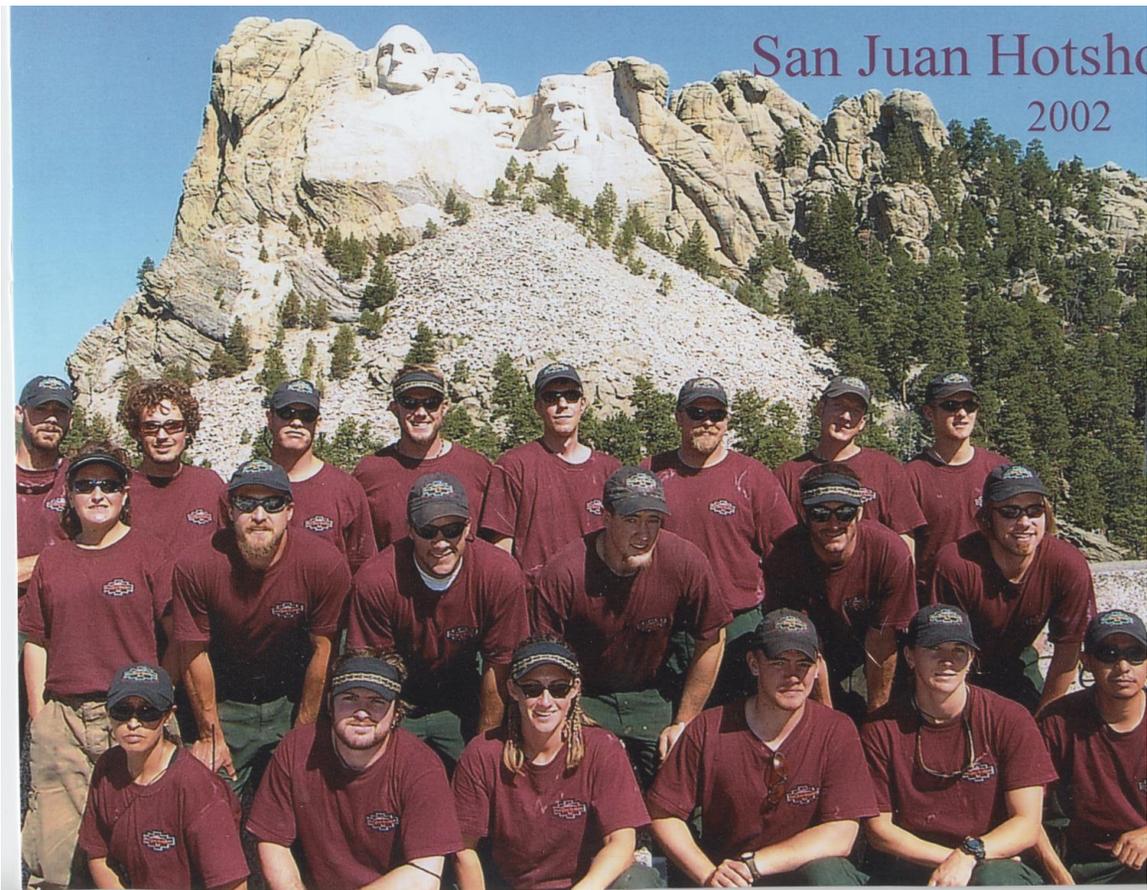




2002



Overview

The San Juan Hotshots formed in 2002 as one of 93 IHC crews in the nation. We are located in Durango, Colorado at Engineer Guard Station. The San Juan IHC is based at 9210 feet and are proud to be the highest based IHC in the nation. The 2002 season was busier than average, in addition to Fires in Colorado the crew went to Wyoming, Idaho, and Oregon. This report gives an overview of the 2002 season covering topics such as the hiring, assignments, training, safety, and fires.



Hiring

Because this was the first year for the San Juan Hotshots there were many positions to fill. The position of superintendent went to Shawna Legarza and she chose Jim Cornelius as her foreman. The squad bosse positions were filled by Mark Babieracki, Yolanda Martinez, and Joe Wyatt. The lead crewmembers were filled by David Frey, Sam McCown, Courtney Madigan and Pam Messal.



(Cornelius/Legarza)



Assignments

The crew started May 6, 2002 and ended October 17, 2002. After 7 weeks of training we were mobilized to the Missionary Ridge Fire. Initially we were assigned to work with the Wyoming IHC. Ultimately we worked 14 day assignment on the Missionary Ridge fire. During this time period we participated in firing operations, structure protection, and line construction. After Missionary Ridge the crew was mobilized to the Beaver Dam Complex on the Wyoming / South Dakota border. We spent two shifts constructing line on the Harding fire. After Beaver Dam Complex the crew was sent to the Burn Canyon Fire near Norwood, Colorado. The fuel type for Burn Canyon was predominately Pinon / Juniper and sage. For the first 5 days of the incident the crew was primarily involved in burn out and direct line construction. We spent a total of 8 days at Burn Canyon. After Burn Canyon we were sent the Big Elk fire on the Roosevelt N.F. near the town of Lyons, CO. We spent 3 days on Big Elk constructing handline.

Following the mandatory two days of R & R the crew was mobilized to the Long Mesa Fire in Mesa Verde National Park. During this incident we were involved in line construction and structure protection. After 4 days we were dispatched to the Cathedral Rock fire on the Montana Idaho border. The fire was located in the Frank Church Wilderness Area. Two shifts later we were sent to the Hemlock Fire on the Willamette N.F. On the Hemlock fire we constructed line and conducted a burn out. Perhaps the most memorable part of the Hemlock Fire was the poison oak. 13 crewmembers experienced varying degrees of irritation from the oak, 5 were required to seek medical assistance. The next mobilization for the crew occurred on August 18 to the Schaff #2 fire on the San Juan N. F., with the top elevation being 11,400. The crew spent 7 shifts on Schaff #2 constructing handline. After Schaff #2 we were sent to the Routt N. F. Our first assignment was the small Sugarloaf Fire. Assignments on the Sugarloaf consisted of handline construction and mop up.

The crew spent 4 shifts on Sugarloaf with an elevation of 10,200. From Sugarloaf we were reassigned to the Mt. Zirkle complex. We spent 2 shifts at Mt. Zirkle constructing handline and taking in views of the Continental Divide. The final fire of the year for the San Juan IHC was Thompson Creek Fire on the White River National Forest. The most memorable aspect of this 3-shift fire was the significant rainfall that sent us home for the season.



(Missionary Ridge Fire)
2002 Assignment Summary

FIRE NAME	STATE	OPERATIONAL SHIFTS	Class
Missionary Ridge	CO	14	G
Beaver Dam Complex	WY	4	F
Burn Canyon	CO	8	G
Big Elk	CO	4	G
Long Mesa	CO	5	G
Cathedral Rock	ID	4	C
Hemlock	OR	7	D
Shaft #2	CO	9	D
Sugarloaf	CO	4	C
Mt. Zirkle Complex	CO	4	G
Thompson Creek	CO	3	D



Training

The first part of the season was dedicated to training. A combination of physical, classroom, and field exercises were utilized. During the first two weeks of the year, we completed double PT sessions consisting of runs up to 6-10 miles, 2-300 push-ups, 500-1000 sit-ups and 20-30 pull-ups. During the remaining 5 five weeks the crew completed PT sessions between 1 ½ to 2 hours in length consisting of runs and calisthenics. In addition we completed several hikes to simulate standard hotshot hikes.

The 2002 season was a big one in terms of training. As a first year crew we completed the mandatory training required for IHC's plus more. This proved to be a good move in the long run as we were able to build crew cohesion and receive all the mandatory gear before going out on the line. Even when the Missionary Ridge Fire was burning the crew was able to stay focused on their classroom and physical training.

The following is a list of courses we completed:

- First Aid and CPR
- S130/S190 Basic Firefighting
- Look Up, Look Down, and Look Around
- Lessons Learned
- S212 Power Saws
- S211 Portable Pumps and Hoses
- S234 Firing Operations
- Human Factors on the Fire Line
- I 100 Basic ICS
- S131 Advanced Firefighter
- Defensive Driving

In addition to the standard classroom training we conducted several field exercises. The main focus of the field exercises was to simulate standard activities faced by a hotshot crew. Line construction, falling techniques, working with fixed and rotor wing aircraft, night operations, mop up, safety zone identification, independent squad deployments, fire shelter deployment, and line location were all covered in the field Exercises. Perhaps the most beneficial aspect of the field exercises was the increase in crew cohesion while the ash fell down around us from the Missionary Ridge Fire. It was bizarre to be practicing line construction with such a large fire burning in our back yard but it would pay off in the long run. The crew also spent 21 shifts at Anasazi Heritage Center on a fuels reduction project. This project allowed new and old sawyers to get trigger time and allowed some individuals to complete task books for a higher-level certification.



Safety

Daily morning briefings are given, followed by the six minute for safety session, with a weekly safety session occurring throughout the season. Tailgate safety sessions are administered along with JHA's completed for specific job tasks. The crew has the proper documentation for safety rules and regulations posted at the Engineer Guard Station. Past fatalities and case studies have been reviewed and will be in the yearly training program.

The San Juan Interagency Hotshot crew is committed to the highest level of safety standards and policies. All agency policies regarding safety will be adhered to at all times. Safety of our crew is our number one priority. We will not accept any task or assignment that puts the crew in jeopardy, but are willing to work to find a compromise that gets the job done safely.



(Martin)



2002 Crew Roster

Legarza, Shawna	Superintendent
Cornelius, Jim	Assistant Superintendent
Babieracki, Mark	Squad Boss
Wyatt, Joe	Squad Boss
Martinez, Yolanda	Squad Boss
McCown, Sam	Lead Crew
Madigan, Courtney	Lead Crew
Messal, Pam	Lead Crew
Frey, David	Lead Crew
Nguyen, Huy	Crew Member
Thiel, Travis	Crew Member
Jones, Ryder	Crew Member
Parker, Tommy	Crew Member
Klatt, Danny	Crew Member
Freese, Jerome	Crew Member
Nobles, Jerome	Crew Member
Hadley, Calvin	Crew Member
Farris, Billy	Crew Member
Birdsell, Jacob	Crew Member
Martin, Lance	Crew Member

2002 Detailers

Yazzie, Clay	14 Days
Morrison, Caleb	14 Days
Krueger, Doug	14 Days