

Twin Peaks



2012 Season Report

Prepared By: Lyle Jennings

Twin Peaks I.A. Fire Crew
State of Utah ♦ Division of Forestry, Fire, and State Lands
271 West Bitterbrush Lane ♦ Draper, UT 84020

FIRE SEASON OVERVIEW

The 2012 fire season was a record breaking fire season for Twin Peaks, due to unseasonably dry weather conditions across the nation over the previous winter and spring. The predictions were as to be expected. Fires began early and did not cease until the end of October. We traveled all over the nation this season, reaching the border of Mexico and eventually the border of Canada and everything in between. We had opportunities to perform a wide array of fire assignments: everything from large scale backfires, structure protection, long duration spike out's, direct attack and everything in between. Crew members gained a wealth of fire experience and had many training opportunities. Most of all, we were rewarded with the opportunity to help those in need.



Cedar Creek Fire Initial attack

FITNESS PROGRAM

Twin Peaks prides itself on its challenging fitness program. The leadership sets the bar very high for crew members, knowing that fitness is the keystone to functioning at a high level on the crew. In week one, also known as "Hell Week" the crew is pushed to their limits. This year on day one we did the pack test which consists of carrying 45lb weighted vest 3 miles in under 45 minutes and upon completion crew members discard the vests and run 3 miles. After completion of the run the crew is tested on their upper body (i.e., pushups, pull ups, dips and sit ups). The rest of the week only gets harder from there. This year we also

incorporated a simulated fire scenario in the West Desert of Utah. The crew constructed hand line, saw line, hiked and did many other training scenarios for a full shift.

2012 SEASON

BEGINS

The crew went available for National Dispatch on May 11. Twin Peaks received a fire call on May 14 while doing work on the Mueller park trail in Bountiful Utah. The first call was to the Bull Flat Fire in Arizona. This was a type II incident on a piece of land owned by the Bureau of Indian Affairs. Upon arrival we assisted in preparation for a two mile long burn that went through the night. We worked six shifts on the fire before being re-assigned to Sierra Vista, Arizona, right by the Mexico Border. The crew staged in preparation for initial attack. After a few days of staging, a fire ignited on the border of Arizona and Mexico. Upon arrival to the fire it was clear that that the fire was in Mexico, and the crew did not have clearance to work over the border. While waiting for the fire to cross the border back to the U.S., another fire named the Collins fire ignited 15 miles north of their location. We quickly responded to the Collins fire and immediately began putting in direct line. By the time we arrived to the fire it had grown to 20

acres. The Crew worked into the night with great success in containing the fire.

Starting the fire season in Sierra Vista was a great challenge for us. We had a chance to put our fitness and training to the test. Being exposed to a harsh environment in a real life scenario helped bring the crew together and build our confidence in suppressing fires. After a full tour in Arizona we took a couple days off for rest. After a short break we were called out to a local fire in Carbon County just outside of Price Utah - the Cedar Creek fire. Cedar Creek was a type 4 incident. Lyle Jennings (the Superintendent of Twin Peaks) took over the fire as the type 4 Incident Commander. The Cedar Creek fire was unique because Twin Peaks was the only crew attached to the fire. The fire was 5 acres and the crew was able to halt any further growth. From there we were reassigned to the Polar Mesa fire in the Manti La Sal National Forest above Moab Utah. Polar Mesa was another type 4 fire ran by the Boise Smoke Jumpers. Twin Peaks quickly went to work initial attacking the fire. After one shift the fire was contained and turned over to Lyle Jennings as the type 4 IC. On the following day, the Polar Mesa Fire was determined to be controlled. The crew moved on to the Type 4 Abajo fire which was a lightning caused fire in Blanding, Utah. The Abajo fire was quickly turned over to Lyle Jennings again as the ICT4 of the fire. The following shift Moab dispatch

called Lyle Jennings and requested the crew split up. Chris Koehler (Twin Peaks Squad Boss) took over the Abajo fire as ICT5 and Sam Ashman (Twin Peaks Lead crew member) had the opportunity to run as the trainee. The rest of the Twin Peaks crew departed with Lyle Jennings and went to the Sunrise Mine fire on the Utah/Colorado border. When the crew arrived the fire was downgraded from a type 2 incident to a type 4. Once again, Jennings took control of the fire. The crew finished their two week tour on Sunrise Mine fire and Abajo fire. This tour was very beneficial for us. It provided excellent training for multiple crew members and certifications. Jennings received his C-Faller certification on the Sunrise Mine fire, and many others were tested on their B-Faller certification, as well as training on FFT1/ ICT5.



Breakfast on the Sunrise Mine fire

After a short break we were called out to a local type 3 incident named the Wiley fire in the West Desert of Utah. Twin Peaks spent one shift suppressing the fire, and was then reassigned to the Rocky Mountain National forest in Granby, Colorado. While the crew was staging they continued to work on their physical fitness. They went for a ten mile hike up to the Shadow mountain lookout tower. The crew enjoyed their time in Granby and learned heaps of information about the local forest health and the pine beetle epidemic that has decimated the beautiful forest. The crew staged for three shifts and was reassigned to the Waldo Canyon Fire. The Waldo Canyon fire was located in Colorado Springs, this was a type 1 incident. Twin Peaks arrived as the fire was just beginning. It was apparent that this fire could potentially become devastating. The fuels were dry and the terrain was steep. Furthermore, there were homes mixed in all throughout the landscape. This made the situation very complex, but we put forth our very best effort. Every crew member worked beyond what they thought was possible. The fire was relentless and did not provide much time for breaks, or sleep. The crew was directed to construct hand line around structures. Upon completion, we began backfiring behind the homes in an attempt to halt the approaching wall of flames. The crew was encouraged with great success in

their division; unfortunately, other areas of the fire were not as lucky. Waldo Canyon burned 346 homes and took 2 lives. This fire will leave an indelible scar on the community. Regardless, the crew was proud to be there and help where we could. This was the biggest challenge for the 2012 Twin Peaks crew. The crew gained great respect from the type 1 fire Operations Section Chief, multiple Division Boss's, as well as other hotshot crews on the fire. The crew completed its tour in Colorado Springs and headed home for some much needed days off.



Direct line on Waldo Canyon Fire Colorado Springs

Burning operations on Jacks Fire Idaho



Shortly after their Rest and Recovery from Waldo Canyon, crew members were again put right back into action, and were sent to a fire in Bruno Idaho. The Jacks fire was a type 3 incident. Twin Peaks assisted with burning operations, while working alongside Boise and Missoula Smoke Jumpers. This fire provided opportunities for backfiring and the crew experienced first hand the difficulties of burning in hot conditions. We felt the effects of breathing in heavy amounts of smoke while being expected to stay engaged. Upon containment of the Jacks fire it was turned over to Jennings as the type 4 Incident Commander. Jennings decided after one day that the fire was out and controlled. The crew demobilized the following day. After taking two short days off, we were assigned to the Baboon fire in Enterprise Utah. This fire was interesting in the fact that it was called out and contained, but rekindled. Although the crew was not involved with the original Baboon fire, this provided a good reminder to the crew of the importance of thoroughly mopping up. Baboon Two was quickly contained which was the theme for this tour. The fire crew responded to five fires throughout Southern Utah and the Arizona Strip. Direct line and cold trailing are the main tactics used on these fires. We did our first line spike at the Wash Fire on the Arizona Strip after being flown in 40 miles from Mesquite, Nevada by helicopter. When we returned from the

Wash fire flight, we were rewarded with 111 degree temperatures to relax in while we waited for the rest of the guys to arrive.

Holding line Jacks Fire



Lightning storm Baboon Fire



Lyle leading crew on Shiviwits fire



MID SEASON

The Twin Peaks crew began the Mid Season feeling strong and cohesive. Having been through so much already at this point, with no foreseeable sign of the fires dissipating the crew maintained high morale and were eager to keep pushing on. The mid season began with a local Utah fire. The Pumpkin fire in Spanish Fork Canyon. The Pumpkin fire was a type 3 incident, which proved challenging due to the steep terrain and poor vehicle access. We spent four shifts securing the active fire edge. After the pumpkin fire was secure, Twin Peaks was assigned over to another local fire named the Faust fire in Vernon, Utah. The Faust Fire was classified as a type 3 incident with multiple hotshot crews and type 2IA crews. We assisted in cold trailing, mop up, and direct line. After three grueling shifts the crew moved on to the Little Pine Fire near Cedar City, Utah. The Little Pine fire was wrapped up quickly and we hit the road to the beautiful St. George, Utah area. The crew was assigned to the Shivwits fire. When the Twin Peaks crew arrived it was around 102 degrees and extremely humid, which is an unusual mixture for St. George. Here the fire was burning active on the backside of a ridge. Not being able to see the fire, the crew could not properly size it up. This meant a difficult two mile hike in very rugged terrain to gain a proper vantage. After gathering Intel, we were

briefed on the details of the fire. The Division Boss determined that it was too steep and treacherous to engage on the fire. Jennings was doubtful about that decision and went to investigate. Upon hiking to the mountain top he noticed there was active fire all along the ridge. Lyle, knowing the crew's ability and experience, decided the crew would be able to engage. He sent the Alpha squad to assist in securing the fire and they soon realized they were outmatched and it would necessitate more support. Lyle requested the entire crew, with helicopter support for transportation and bucket drops, to get a handle on this one. After five days of continuous work the crew put the fire to bed and was able to move on.

After this tour Twin Peak lost two valuable crew members; Chase Stilson and Nicko Paraso. They were transferred to the Alta Handcrew, which was in need of a couple experienced crew members. In return, the Dromedary crew filled the vacancies on Twin Peaks with two crew members (Sam Barnes and Wes Ashton). After days off and some shuffling of crew gear, Twin Peaks was on the road again. They were sent to Idaho, the Trinity Ridge fire in the Boise National Forest. The crew is always excited to go to Idaho. They know they can expect incredible scenery and some burly hikes. This was a great fire to have our new guys experience. It's always good to have a tough break-in period with long, steep, and rugged

hikes and direct line construction. These are the two secret ingredients for a reality check. Twin Peaks worked alongside a few hotshot crews attempting to gain a foothold cutting direct line. The first attempt resulted in failure, rushing the crew to their safety zone. The crews kept pushing and eventually persevered. We were asked to spike out at around 9000 ft elevation. This offered great training for the individuals in setting up the cargo nets and calculating load amounts. Trinity Ridge was great for the Sawyers and Swampers. The forest had numerous trees that needed to be cut down. The saw teams were ecstatic to get some action snagging trees in an effort to protect the fire line, the digging team following behind. The crew spent a full 14 days on this tour.



Holding the direct fire line on Trinity Ridge

After our days off from the Trinity Ridge fire, we were called back to Idaho, and were sent to the Deadwood Complex on the Boise National

Forest. This was a small, type 3 incident. The crew was flown up and spiked out on a ridge top, supported by dispatch. We cold trailed and mopped up. After flying off the ridge, we were reassigned to the Karney fire; approximately two hours away. The crew saddled up and drove to the fire. The Karney was a complex, type 3 incident that was burning in a community. We started initial attack around 1700, and finished initial attack at 0400 in the morning. We worked the rest of the tour securing the fire and rehabilitating the suppression impacts around homes. After taking days off we received a dispatch that was completely unexpected. The crew was requested to upstate Minnesota, to a fire called the Wannaska Complex. This encompassed multiple small fires burning by Karlstad, Minnesota. This was the last fire tour of the season and a great one to end on. We learned a lot about the different fuel types in Minnesota and the fire tactics used in Minnesota. This was a great experience for the whole crew to learn and grow from.

OVERVIEW

The Twin Peaks crew had an amazing season... We began the season hitting small initial attack fires hard, while eating MRE's for days on end. It transitioned mid-season to larger fires for a longer duration on assignments. We experienced a wide array of fire line tactics and

had multiple helicopter flights. We achieved above and beyond on all assignments. We surpassed all overtime records for the Twin Peaks crew history and spent less than a month at home this season. The entire crew sacrificed their summer to making this season a success. Thank you to all the Twin Peaks families for supporting us and helping us achieve such a memorable season.



Column of mass destruction on Waldo Canyon



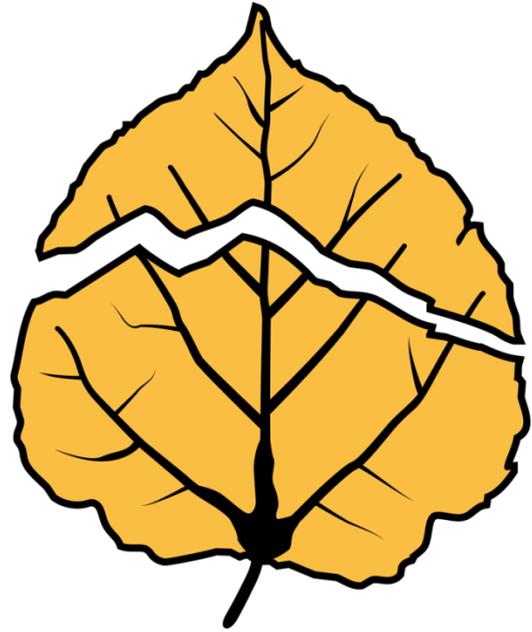
The crew watching bucket work on Waldo Canyon



Retreating from the Waldo Canyon Fire

FAREWELL

This season we will be losing two important pieces of the Twin Peaks Crew. Chris Koehler(Charlie Squad Boss) is moving to Driggs Idaho to pursue greener pastures. Chris will be missed he has worked with Twin Peaks since 2010 and Lone Peak Conservation Center since 2007. Thanks Chris for all you have sacrificed throughout the years in making Twin Peaks the crew it is today. Sam Ashman (Charlie Squad Lead Crew Member) will be leaving us as well. Sam is going to begin Paramedic school soon. He has been on the crew since 2010. Thanks Sam for working hard and setting a great example for the younger fire fighters.



Twin Peaks



The crew on the Faust Fire

THE 2012 TWIN PEAKS



Crew Photo Wannaska Complex Minnesota

Back Row Left: Scott Copeland, Jake Mandelko, Chris Koehler, Jeremy Foster, Ted Sneed, Austin Wilson, Rob Whitten, Sam Ashman, Lyle Jennings

Front Row Left: Jesse Diyanni, Colton Esplin, Josh Berg, Ryan Evans, Brett Branin, Tyler Lair, Sam Barnes, Jesses Stratton, Tyler Finn, Ben Parker

TWIN PEAKS 2012 CREW

Name	Position	Duration
<i>Lyle Jennings</i>	<i>Crew Boss</i>	<i>Permanent</i>
<i>Matt Schrier</i>	<i>Squad Boss</i>	<i>04/31/12- 8/5/12</i>
<i>Austin Wilson</i>	<i>Squad Boss</i>	<i>Permanent</i>
<i>Chris Koehler</i>	<i>Squad Boss</i>	<i>Permanent</i>
<i>Ted Sneed</i>	<i>Squad Boss</i>	<i>Permanent</i>
<i>Jared Minnesota</i>	<i>Lead Crew Member</i>	<i>04/31/2012 – 9/7/2012</i>
<i>Scott Copeland</i>	<i>Lead Crew Member</i>	<i>04/31/2012 – 11/01/2012</i>
<i>Sam Ashman</i>	<i>Lead Crew Member</i>	<i>04/31/2012 – 11/01/2012</i>
<i>Rob Whitten</i>	<i>Sawyer</i>	<i>04/31/2012 – 11/01/2012</i>
<i>Brett Branin</i>	<i>Sawyer</i>	<i>04/31/2012 – 11/01/2012</i>
<i>Josh Berg</i>	<i>Sawyer</i>	<i>04/31/2012 – 11/01/2012</i>
<i>Tyler Lair</i>	<i>Swamper</i>	<i>04/31/2012 – 11/01/2012</i>
<i>Ryan Evans</i>	<i>Swamper</i>	<i>04/31/2012 – 11/01/2012</i>
<i>Colton Esplin</i>	<i>Swamper</i>	<i>04/31/2012 – 11/01/2012</i>
<i>Jeremy Foster</i>	<i>Crew member</i>	<i>04/31/2012 – 11/01/2012</i>
<i>Jake Mandelko</i>	<i>Crew member</i>	<i>04/31/2012 – 11/01/2012</i>
<i>Tyler Finn</i>	<i>Crew member</i>	<i>04/31/2012 – 11/01/2012</i>
<i>Nico Paraso</i>	<i>Crew member</i>	<i>04/31/2012 – 08/22/2012</i>
<i>Chase Stilson</i>	<i>Crew member</i>	<i>04/31/2012 – 08/22/2012</i>
<i>Ben Parker</i>	<i>Crew member</i>	<i>04/31/2012– 11/1/2012</i>
<i>Matt Park</i>	<i>Crew member</i>	<i>04/31/2012 – 11/01/2012</i>
<i>Jesse Stratton</i>	<i>Crew member</i>	<i>04/31/2012 – 11/01/2012</i>
<i>Sam Barnes</i>	<i>Crew member-Detailer</i>	<i>09/03/2012 – 11/01/2012</i>
<i>Wes Ashton</i>	<i>Crew member-Detailer</i>	<i>09/03/2012 – 11/01/2012</i>

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

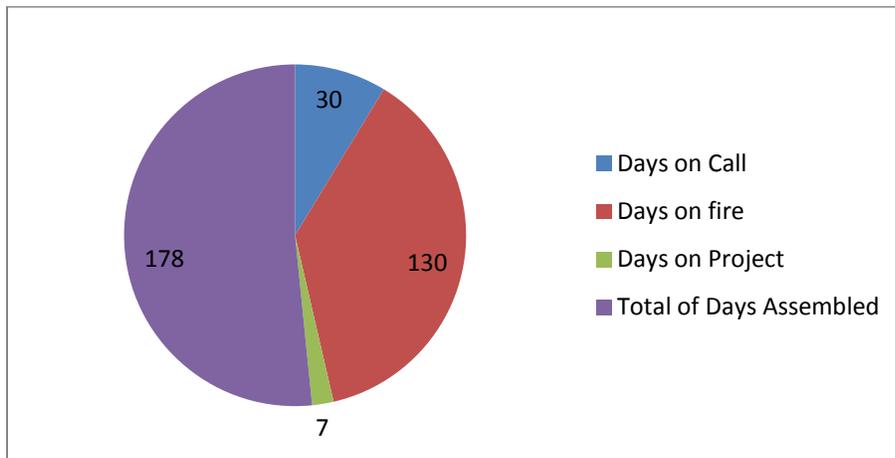
Sawyer of the year: *Robinson Whitten*

Swamper of the year: *Ryan Evans*

Firefighter of the year: *Chris Koehler*

2012 Season Data

Breakdown of the crew's time on fire, project, and time on call.



Breakdown of fire complexity management level the crew was assigned.

