



## MEMORANDUM OF ACTIVITY

**Date:** 03/28/2012

**Person Conducting Activity:** SA Shannon Tokos

**Activity Location:** Conifer, Colorado

**Reference:** Entrance Briefing-Lower North Fork Fire  
Andy Parker-Jefferson County Type 3 Planning and Operations  
Chief (LM1200582)

On 03/28/12, at 1326 hours, Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Special Agent, Shannon Tokos met with Andy Parker at the Three Margaritas Restaurant in Conifer, Colorado. Parker was the Planning and Operations Chief for the Jefferson County Incident Management, Type 3 Team on the Lower North Fork Fire. Also attending the briefing were U.S. Forest Service (USFS) Special Agent, Brenda Schultz, and BLM Park Ranger/Fire Investigator, Troy Schnurr. Parker provided the following information.

Parker is a volunteer with the Jefferson County Sheriff's, Office of Emergency Management, which is under the oversight of Jefferson County Sheriff, Ted Mink. On 03/26/12, at approximately 1610 hours Parker was in Lakewood, Colorado on personal business when he noticed the smell of smoke. He stated that around 1630 hours he stepped outside and noticed that the southern sky was one large convection column. At approximately 1915 hours he received a call at home from James "Tim" McSherry, Director of Emergency Management with the Jefferson County Sheriff's Office. McSherry requested Parker's assistance with the Type 3 Team. At 1950 hours Parker arrived at the Incident Command Post for the Lower North Fork Fire.

According to Parker, the Colorado State Forest Service (CSFS) ignited a prescribed burn on Thursday, 03/22/12. The burn was also used as a training exercise, so there were over sixty people in attendance from various agencies, operating in several disciplines. The fuels were previously masticated (date unknown). Parker stated that the prescribed burn unit had been black-lined approximately a week before the fire escaped.

On 03/26/12 crews were on-site to conduct mop-up. The Burn Boss was Kirk Will, CSFS Golden District. Will had a trainee with him by the name of Kevin Michalak, CSFS Golden District. There was an Ignition Boss (NU) from Platte Canyon Fire Protection District near Fort Collins, Colorado. The Holding Boss was (Lt.?) Sam Parsons from Fairmount Fire Protection District in Arvada, Colorado. Parsons had a trainee with him by the name of Rich Palestro, CSFS Boulder District. The Safety Officer was Rocco Snart, Fire Management Officer with the Jefferson County Sheriff's Office of Emergency Management. Parker was under the impression that mop-up was not complete when the fire escaped.

SA SJT

Parker relayed the following information that he had received from Snart, who was reading from his notes. On 3/26/12 at approximately 1300 hours Snart received a call from Inter-Canyon Fire Protection District Fire Chief, Curt Rogers (later determined to be the Fire Chief for the North Fork Fire Protection District) and Bill McLaughlin, Fire Chief, Elk Creek Fire Protection District. Rogers and McLaughlin reported that the fire had escaped the controlled burn boundaries and that it was currently approximately 1.5 acres in size.

Michalak, who was the Incident Commander for the mop-up operation on 03/26/12, transitioned to the Type 4 Incident Commander when the escape occurred. Snart, who was acting as a quasi-dispatcher for the incident received a call from Will at approximately 1300 hours requesting three Type 6 engines.

At 1300 hours on 03/26/12, Dell Clineschmidt, Captain of Patrol with the Jefferson County Sheriff's Office, contacted his patrol units to see if they had checked on some reports of smoke in the area. Deputies replied that they had looked into the matter and that the fire was approximately five acres. Clineschmidt told the Deputies to get back to the fire. Upon returning to the fire, the Deputies reported that it had grown to ten acres in size.

Parker stated that the next report (time unknown) relayed that the fire had grown to 20 acres. This report came from an unknown person on scene.

At 1436 hours on 03/26/12, radio traffic relayed that the fire was making a massive run, and that the conditions were very windy. Parker did not know what channel the traffic was aired on.

In regard to the current situation, Parker stated that three of the County Type 3 Teams had been 420 [Incident Command System] trained. He said that on 3/28/12 at approximately 1226 hours the fire was transitioned to a Type I Team and that the Incident Command Post was at the High School in Conifer, Colorado. Parker informed the investigation team that a USAR (Urban Search and Rescue) team had been brought in on 03/28/12, and they were currently operating within the fire boundary.

Parker stated that Don Roach, Investigator with the Jefferson County Sheriff's Office had requested the investigation team on behalf of the Sheriff. The objective was to find out what happened. Parker informed the team that they were to work with Roach. He did not know if Clineschmidt would be involved or not. The Type 1 Incident Commander for the Lower North Fork Fire was Paul Broyles (later determined to be the Deputy Incident Commander).

Parker mentioned that the State and local fire departments did not know that the investigation team was on site. The presence of the investigation team was kept on a need to know basis in order to avoid any unintentional influence. Parker stated that this was done upon the request of Roach.

Parker informed the investigation team that the origin area was on State land (later determined to be the private property of the Denver Water Board). He said that he had requested that the origin area be protected and that the Jefferson County Sheriff's Office had been keeping people from entering the area. Parker defined the origin area as the location where the fire escaped the control line. He said that the Colorado State Forest Service thought they had the fire mopped up. Parker did not know if there was a burn ban in place when the prescribed burn was ignited on 03/22/2012. He informed the investigation team that a red flag warning had been issued for Friday, March 30, 2012 and that 35-80 mph. winds were predicted.

SA SJT

When asked about other activity in the area, Parker stated that there were no known reports of suspicious activity or incidents. He mentioned hearing about an illegal campfire form Clineschmidt. He recalled that it was reported before the escape, but he did not know an exact location.

Parker was not aware of any photographs of the fire, other than those taken by the media.

According to Parker, the Colorado State Forest Service had closed the Golden District office, and was offering Critical Incident Stress Management debriefings to the employees. Staff from their Fort Collins office would be providing some limited service.

Parker agreed to obtain weather information for the investigation team as well as a fire map showing land status. He mentioned that audio recordings of the radio traffic could be obtained from the Jefferson County Sheriff's Office, or through Carol Small, Director of the Emergency Operations Center, Jefferson County, Colorado. Parker provided her contact information and stated that if Small could not be reached, the phone would ring to Kelly (LNU) who works the front desk.

When asked for a copy of the prescribed burn plan, Parker stated that Clineschmidt was working on obtaining one, but Snart had a copy in his office. Parker did not have a copy of the Fire Briefing Packet, but he called Roach and requested one.

Parker stated that Geographical Information System (GIS) data could be obtained through Skip (LNU) with the Type I Team and provided his contact information.

Parker mentioned that the Public Information Officer was Jackie Kelley with the Jefferson County Sheriff's Office, and provided her contact information to the team.

Parker had informed the investigation team that he was not feeling well and that he intended to return home.

I certify that this report has recorded in it a summary of all pertinent matters discussed with Parker on 3/28/12.

*/s/ Shannon J. Tokos*

(Signature)

Shannon J. Tokos, Special Agent  
Office of Law Enforcement and Security, Region 4