



USDA
Forest Service

MEMORANDUM OF INTERVIEW
(Reference FSH 5309.11)

1. CASE NUMBER

LM1200582 (BLM)
MAQL000 (USFS)

2. NATURE OF INVESTIGATION

Wildland Fire – Lower North Fork Fire

3. NAME OF PERSON INTERVIEWED *(Last, First, Middle)*

SNART, Rocco

4. SOCIAL SEC. NO.

5. DOB

//**

6. SEX

M

7. HOME ADDRESS *(St., City, State, ZIP Code)*

8. DRIVER'S LIC. NO.

9. PHONE (C) *(Area Code)*

303-***-***

10. EMPLOYMENT *(Occupation and Location)*

Fire Management Officer – Jefferson County Sheriff's Office

11. PHONE (W) *(Area Code)*

██████████

12. LOCATION OF INTERVIEW

Incident Command Post (Conifer High School)

13. NAME OF OFFICER CONDUCTING INTERVIEW

Special Agent Brenda Schultz

14. OTHERS PRESENT

none

15. STARTED

Date

Time

ENDED

Date

Time

16. REMARKS

On March 30, 2012 at 1720 hours, US Forest Service Special Agent Brenda Schultz interviewed Rocco Snart at the Lower North Fork Fire Incident Command Post (Conifer High School). Snart is the Fire Management Officer for the Jefferson County Sheriff's Office.

On Thursday, March 22th Snart was at the Lower North Fork Fire Prescribed Burn briefing; Snart was assigned as the Safety Officer on the prescribed burn as a collateral duty. He had a training crew with him that day (8 people) for their annual fireline refresher training. Snart stated he had the trainees with him most of the day on the prescribed fire unit then he released them at approximately 1430 hours. The trainees were Parks and Open Space Staff and Rangers.

After he released the trainees down at the red gate on Foxton Road he returned to the prescribed burn unit. Snart recalled that by approximately 1500 hours the prescribed burn crew had split the firing crews and were igniting in additional locations in Unit 4. The fire was burning well in the interior of the unit. Snart stated that he established the line was secure and there were no imminent threats to the line.

At one point there was what Snart referred to as "one tiny spot" outside the blackline and it was recognized immediately and taken care of. Snart marked on the map where he recalled the spot was. That map was initialed and dated by Snart and is included as part of the investigation record with this interview. The spot Snart referred to is to the west of the March 26th slopover areas.

Snart stayed on the prescribed fire until approximately 1930 hours on March 22nd. He recalled that the ignition action had been completed by approximately 1600-1700 hours. The fire was consuming the masticated fuels on the ground and had moved into some of the stringer fuels in the drainages. By 1300 he believed 25% of the prescription unit had burned. He recalled it was 40 acre unit.

The unit had been blacklined the Monday prior (March 19). The top of the unit was blacklined approximately one



chain deep.

On March 16th Snart had checked the fuel moisture near the prescription unit and the 1,000 hour fuels were at 34%. Snart stated it is difficult to forecast the winds in that area because of the terrain; it has always been known as a difficult wind area.

Snart stated they started the ignition on the 22nd along the west side of Unit 4 and carried it east along the ridge. SA Schultz showed Snart a map of the area and he marked the location where the prescribed burn ignition started.

Snart stated he was not on the “go/no go” checklist signature line for the prescribed burn on March 22nd. Snart stated he was the one making the “go/no go” decision on that unit last Fall (2011) and had cancelled the prescribed burn at that time due to the conditions. At that time (Fall 2011) he had blacklined some of Unit 4 and the conditions had led to slopovers during the blackline work so he cancelled the burn. The slopover of the blackline in the Fall of 2011 was in the saddle at the ridgeline along the northeast side of Burn Unit 4 so when he heard that the March 26th slopover was in the same area as the Fall slopover he knew where it was located.

Snart stated there is a RAWS station, the North Waterton RAWS in the area, but it was not functioning.

Snart stated he has a Type 6 Engine and crew and they returned to the prescription unit at approximately 0900 on Friday (March 23, 2012) and started mopping up. Snart spoke to Allen Gallamore (CSFS District Forester) on Friday and was told by Gallamore that the line was secure. Snart understood the crews were going to continue patrol and monitoring on Saturday and Sunday (March 24 and 25).

The fire behavior Snart expected during the patrol and monitoring is that the fire would not have surface spread, but would burn out the heavier fuels within the interior of the unit. The purpose of the patrol was to monitor that nothing was jumping the line. Snart stated he understood they would be patrolling and monitoring on Saturday and Sunday.

Snart did not receive any phone calls regarding the prescribed fire on Sunday March 25th. On Monday, March 26th Snart’s fuels crew returned to their normal operations.

Snart recalls that the Red Flag Warning went into effect at 1000 hours on Monday March 26th. Snart forwards the Red flag warning as a page to the area personnel on their handheld devices. Snart stated that this Monday Red Flag Warning was the first warning issued for Zone 216 for this season.

Snart stated that US Forest Service Fire Management Officer Jeff Vanis “controls the availability of the fuels component” for the Red Flag Warning and Snart does not believe Vanis had made the fuels component available until recently, or until the previous day(s). Snart stated that if the fuels component is not marked as “available” then the National Weather Service cannot issue a Red Flag Warning.

Snart stated he was in an interview with Channel 4 News at approximately 1230 hours on Monday March 26th discussing the current fire danger in the area. After the 1230 news interview was concluded he received a call from Kirk Will asking for three engines to assist at the Lower North Fork site. Snart stated he then walked from his office over to JeffCo Dispatch to have the engines sent to assist Kirk.

Snart believed Kirk Will was calling from the CSFS Golden office. Kirk Will told Snart that the slopover was in the area of the old slopover (2011) and Snart stated he knew exactly where that was because the blackline he (Snart) was burning in 2011 on the same unit had jumped the line and had to be suppressed. Snart stated the 2011 slopover



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was during the prescribed burn prep work in the same saddle area, but they had held that slopover to less than 1/10 of an acre.

Snart stayed in JeffCo Dispatch to listen to the radio traffic, there was another fire at the time in the County. Snart then got another call from Kirk Will that the fire had grown in size and he needed two additional handcrews.

17. OFFICER'S SIGNATURE

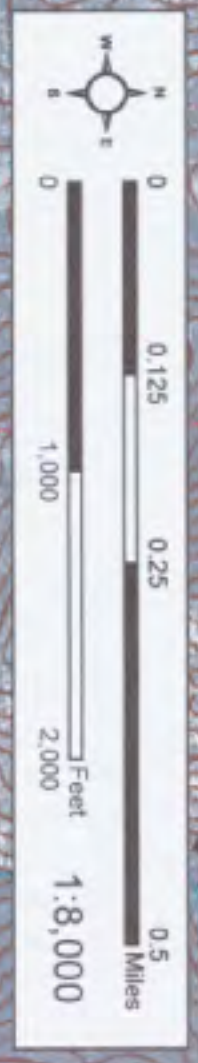
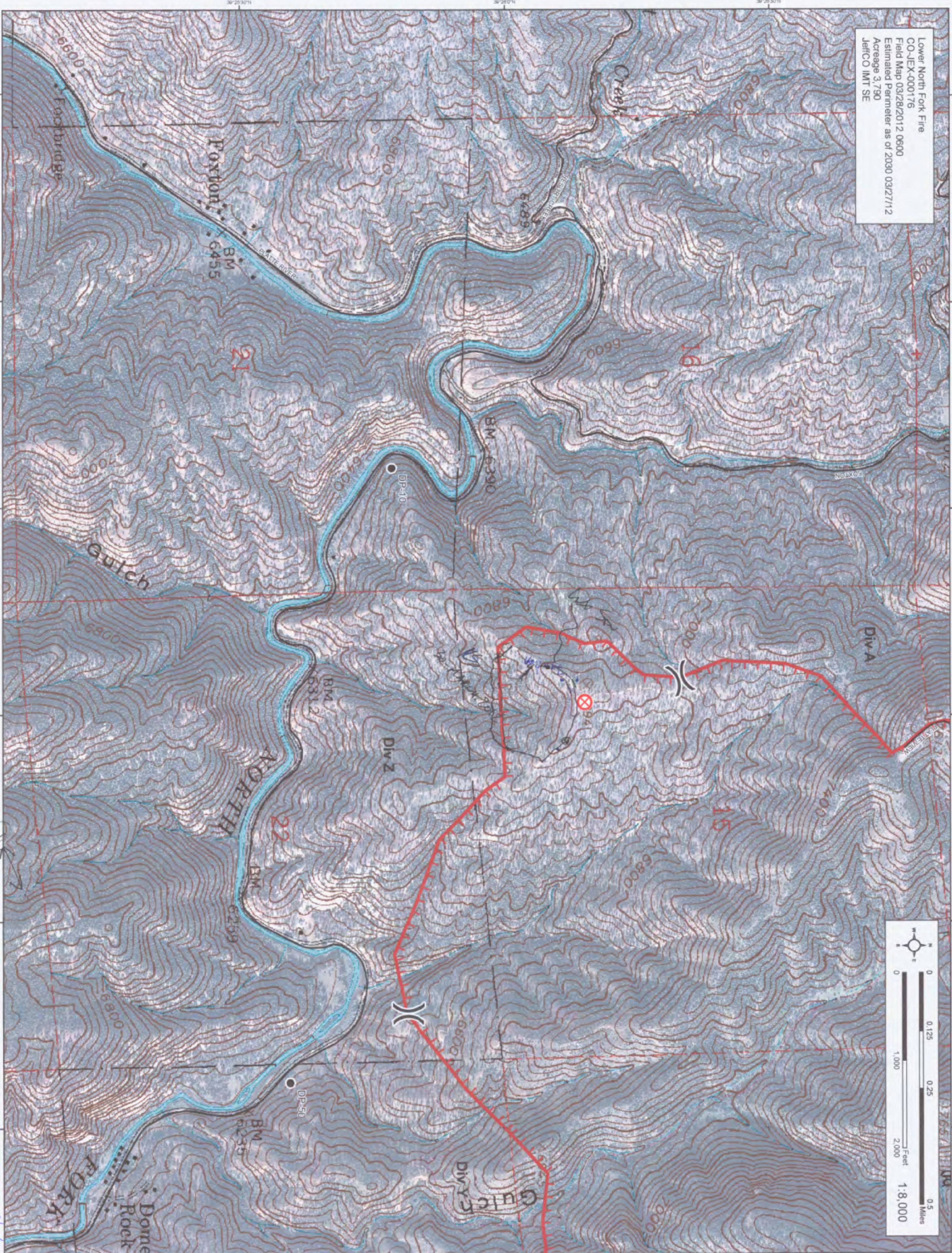
/s/ Brenda J. Schultz

18. WITNESS' SIGNATURE *(If Applicable)*

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Previous Editions are Obsolete

Lower North Fork Fire
CO-JEX-000176
Field Map 03/28/2012 0600
Estimated Perimeter as of 2030 03/27/12
Acreage 3,790
JeffCO IMT SE



Handwritten notes on the left side of the map:
- A north arrow pointing up.
- A circled 'N' with an arrow pointing right.
- The text 'LWFC' in blue.
- The text 'Focus Shift Interview 3:50/2' in blue.