

North Cascades Smokejumper Base



2017

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Season Summary

The winter of 2016-2017 brought an average amount of precipitation and snow pack to the Cascade Mountains of Washington. A typical spring was followed by an extremely dry summer. The lack of precipitation also limited the number of lightning events and the fires that did ignite, due to the dry conditions, quickly grew into large project fires. In summary, **20** fires were jumped out of NCSB in 2017 and an additional **17** fires were staffed by NCSB jumpers as either detailers or boosters. The first fire out of Winthrop was jumped on June 26th and the last on September 15th. Nationally the North Cascades Smokejumpers conducted **557** total jumps and spent **1,218** days on assignment with **0** loss time injuries.

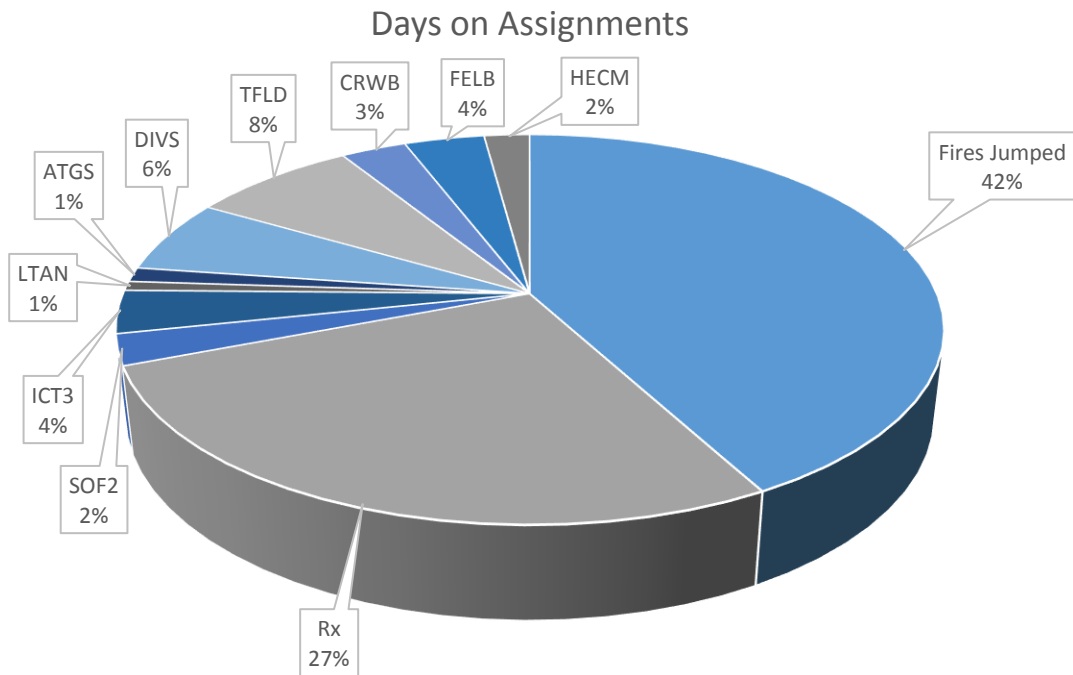
In 2017 NCSB employed 27 smokejumpers with 22 returning jumpers and 5 rookies. Bighorn Airways, Inc. provide a CASA 212 (J-09) for 120 days this season. The jump ship was on contract from June 1st through September 28th.

The use of NCSB smokejumpers came from a larger user group than years past. Only 35% of fires staffed were on the Okanogan Wenatchee NF. NCSB provided initial attack fire suppression for the Colville Bureau of Indian Affairs, Colville NF, North Cascades National Park, the Umatilla NF and the Wallowa Whitman NF. On two separate occasions the jump ship and crew were mobilized to the La Grande Air Center to provided IA coverage. On both occasions multiple fires were staffed during a single flight (one take-off and one landing) proving the effectiveness of the smokejumper program.

Operations

The North Cascades Smokejumpers staffed 20 fires out of NCSB and an additional 17 as boosters or detailers. The base provided assistance to incident management teams on 17 separate large fires through 29 single resource assignments. Prescribed burning accounted for 27% of assignment days with 319 days nationally. In addition to the local RX work, the smokejumper program routinely assists Region 8 with both prescribed and wildland fires.

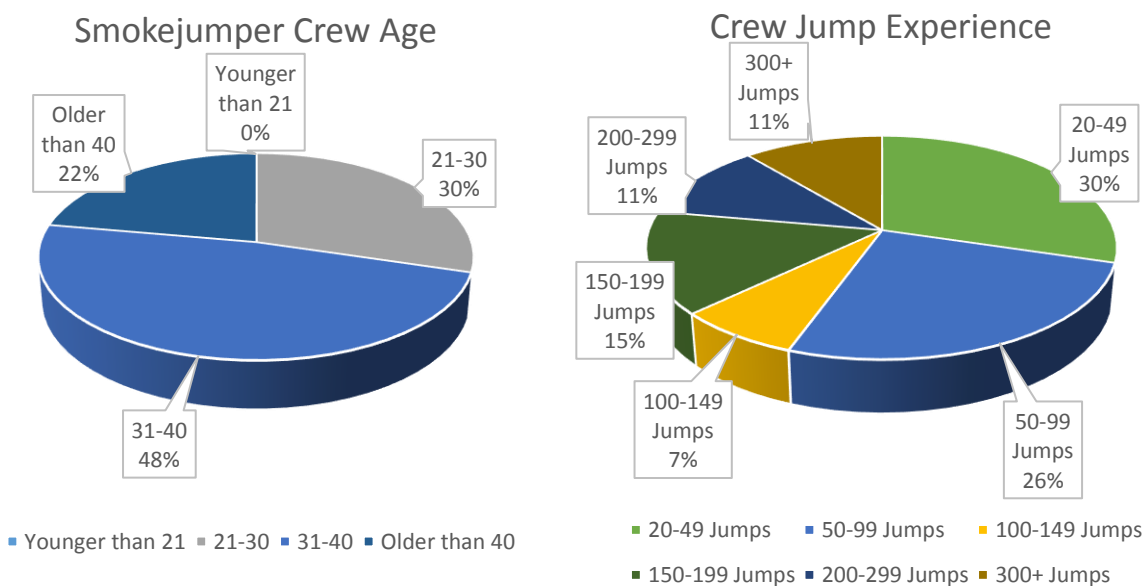
	NCSB	Boost/Detail	Total Fires Jumped	Total Days on Fire
Fires Jumped	20	10/7	37	509



Operations Continued

	Qualified Days	Trainee Days	Total Days
Prescribed Fire	319		319
SOF2		30	30
ICT3	16	26	42
LTAN		9	9
ATGS	14		14
DIVS	69	3	72
TFLD	65	26	91
CRWB	18	18	36
FELB	14	30	44
HECM	25		25
Other	16	11	27
Single Resource	556	153	709

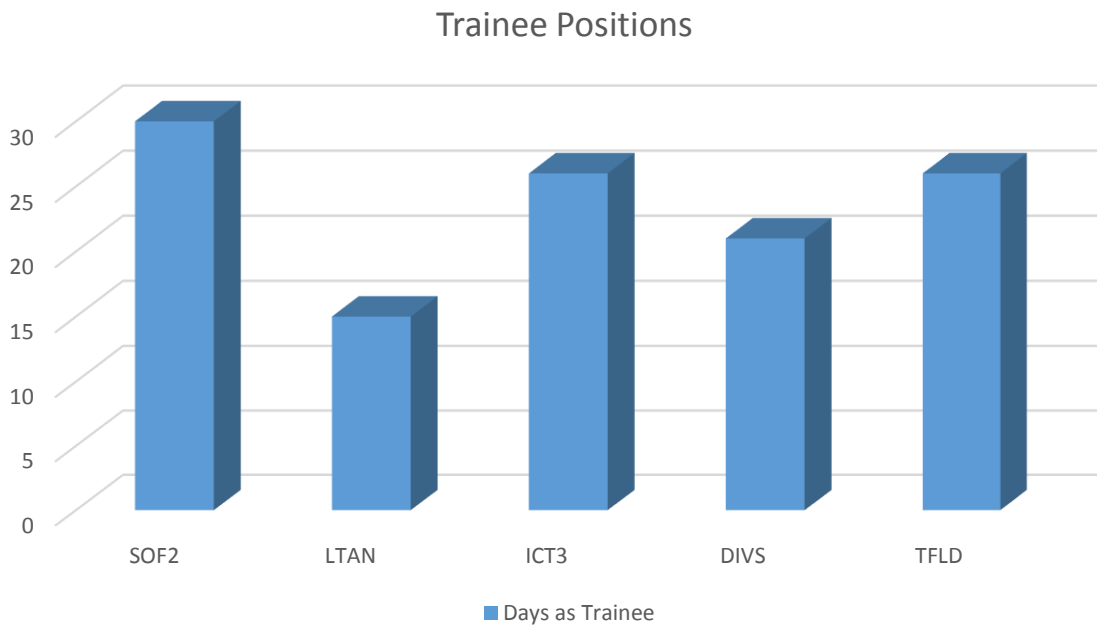
During the 2017 season NCSB transitioned 2 jumpers to the ram air parachute system. Both employees trained in Missoula and spent the majority of their summer in Region 1. Looking forward to 2018 we will be transitioning another 3 jumpers.



The average age in 2017 was 34 years old and the average jumper has completed 136 jumps.

Training

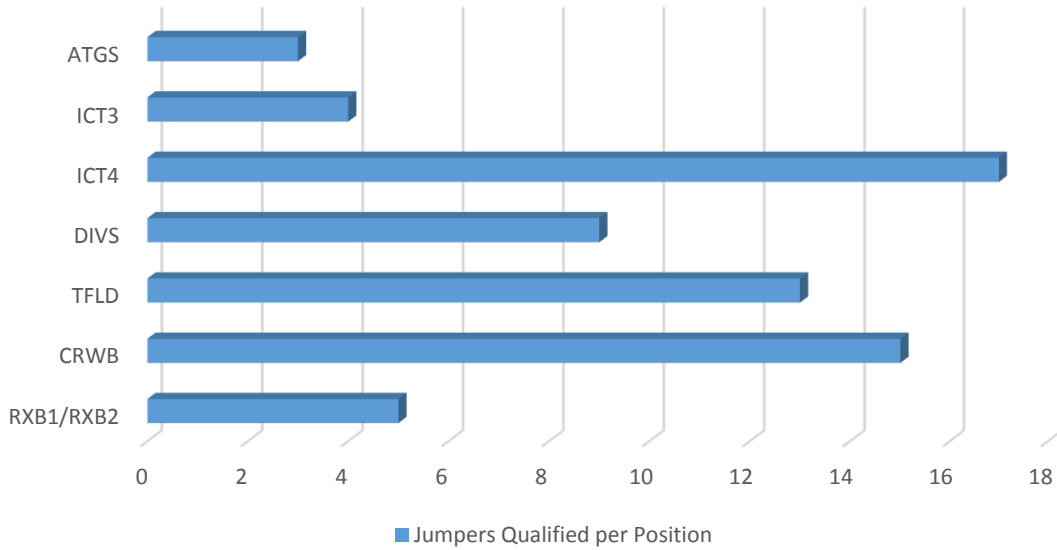
During the 2017 season the North Cascades Smokejumpers maintained the development of a diversified workforce by supporting a broad range of career development and training opportunities. NCSB provided training opportunities for SOF2, LTAN, ICT3, DIVS, TFLD, CRWB, and several other positions.



There are currently 48 open task books between 27 smokejumpers. This season 15 task books were initiated and 6 were certified. The North Cascades Smokejumpers strive to provide employees with developmental opportunities to meet the IFPM requirements for high complexity fire management. The core for these positions being DIVS and either ICT3 or RXB2. NCSB currently has 7 employees that meet or exceed these requirements.

Training Continued

North Cascades Smokejumpers Qualifications



NCSB hired 7 rookie candidates for 2017 and 5 successfully completed the training.



Loft

During the 2017 season NCSB Loft rigged 702 main parachutes and 148 reserves. Jumpers also accomplished 55 canopy repairs, 17 of which were major repairs. NCSB tested and certified 2 FAA Master Parachute Riggers and 1 Senior Rigger. In addition to the FAA certified riggers, all jumpers including rookies, have completed the required training and have successfully jumped their own parachute.

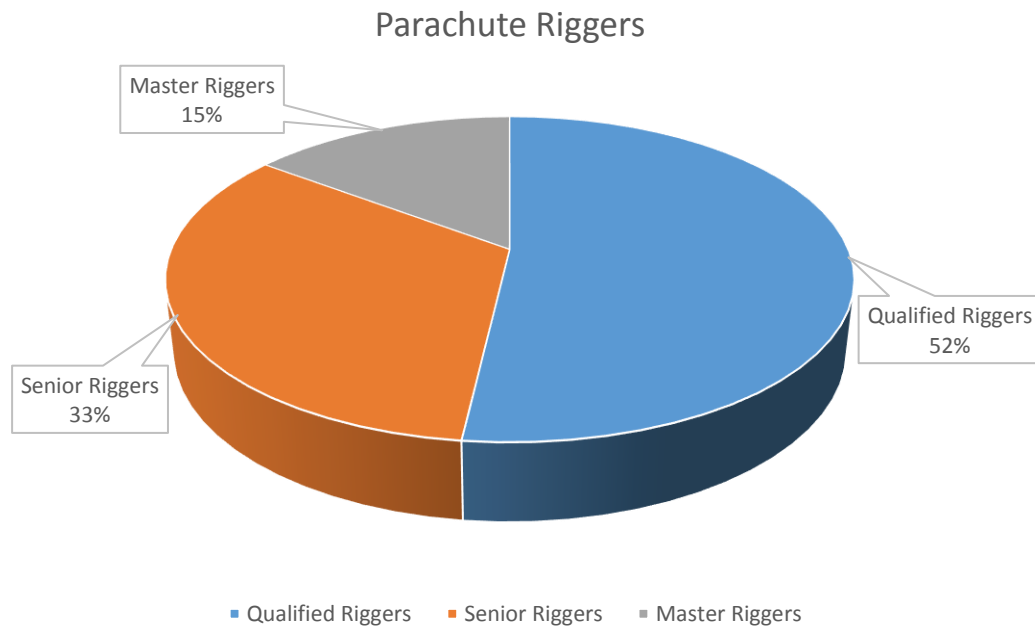


The Loft has been working diligently all year to continue preparing for the ram air transition. Accomplishments include manufacturing 20 drogue deployment bags, 20 main deployment bags, 20 sets of reserve risers, and 20 sets of main risers. In November we sent 2 jumpers to R-1 to gain experience manufacturing the ram air harness. Another group will be traveling after the New

Year to continue working on ram air equipment with experienced ram air jumpers. Although the transition is a priority the Loft still has the standard workload it always has. We converted and in-serviced 50 24 foot military T-10R parachutes into cargo chutes and manufactured associated deployment bags and static lines to comply with ISMOG standards.

Loft Continued

Other manufacturing this season consisted of personnel gear bags, pack out bags, and shoulders straps. NCSB also helped out the local district by repairing damaged fire gear and manufacturing beaver bags.



One of the main goals of the NCSB Loft is to train every jumper to be self-sufficient and, at a minimum, be able to pack their own main canopy. We are very proud to report that all 27 smokejumpers meet this standard.

Significant Smokejumper Action

On August 25th, 2017 NCSB received two orders simultaneously requesting smokejumpers. One order was for a new start near Leavenworth, WA-OWF-000439, and the other was for a remote spot fire on the Norse Peak Fire. The decision was made to launch with 10 smokejumpers instead of the standard load of 8 (an option the CASA can safely support) so that we could sufficiently staff both incidents. The new start received 2 jumpers with cargo and the spot fire on Norse received 8 complete with cargo. After finishing both missions, a round trip of nearly 250 miles, the aircraft was fueled, reloaded with cargo, and ready to reinforce the new start #439 with more jumpers. 6 jumpers loaded up and launched towards Leavenworth. While in route back to #439 NCSB Operations received a phone call from the Fire Management Officer on the North Cascades National Park expressing a critical need for smokejumpers on the Thunder Junction Fire, WA-NCP-000273. This was a new start for them and it was short staffed with only 4 Park Service employees. Through good communications and coordination the decision was made to reinforce Incident #439 with 4 of the 6 jumpers on board and save the last 2 for the National Park. After successfully inserting the reinforcements and cargo on #439 the ship returned to NCSB, a round trip of 130 miles, for another refueling and cargo. This also gave us the chance to pull one of the spotters from the morning missions and use them as a jumper as well as call in jumpers on days off so that the National Park fire would receive 4 jumpers instead of just 2. Shortly after noon, J-09 was off NCSB in route to the Thunder Junction Fire with 4 jumpers and 2 spotters on board. After a quick 17 minute flight the jump ship was delivering the much needed reinforcements complete with cargo to the fire. The aircraft was back on the ground at NCSB, a round trip of 90 miles, by 1400 hours. The FMO on the Park was very thankful for the amazing capacity of our fixed wing aerially delivered firefighter program. The Thunder Junction Fire was contained at 2.5 acres. Incident #439 near Leavenworth was contained at less than 1 acre and the remote spot fire on the Norse Peak Fire was contained at just over 20 acres.

Within an 8 hour time frame NCSB had safely delivered 18 smokejumpers with 4,000 lbs. of cargo to 3 separate incidents covering nearly 500 miles.

Organizational Charts

Base Manager:	Daren Belsby	tour 26/0
Operations:	Supervisor: Michael Noe	26/0
	Assistant: Matt Desimone	18/8
	Spotter: Reduced to 120 day detail	120 days
	Squad Leader: Reduced to 120 day detail	120 days
	PSE: Guy Mclean, JT Sawyer, Nathan Allen	13/13
	Temp: +1 1039's	
Training:	Supervisor: Inaki Baraibar	26/0
	Assistant: Removed from Org. Chart in 2016	0
	Spotter: Ryan Taie	13/13
	Squad Leader: Fidel Verduzco	13/13
	PSE: Jason Ramos, Jarrod Hattervig, Removed in 2016	13/13
	Temp: +8 1039's	
Loft:	Supervisor: VACANT	26/0
	Assistant: Charles McCarthy	18/8
	Spotter: Ryan McCliment (Ram Air Transition detail)	13/13
	Squad Leader: VACANT	13/13
	PSE: Blake Stokes, Jeremy Zemke (Ram Air Transition detail), Scott McClanahan	13/13
	Temp: +3 1039's	

The organizational structure at NCSB is in a state of flux. In 2016 a review team lead by Region 6 converted 2 positions from permanent to 120 day details as well as removed 2 permanent positions, one GS-6 and on GS-9. These 4 positions are highlighted in the above chart along with the 2 vacancies. NCSB is working towards recovering these positions in hopes of a complete and full organizational structure as soon as possible.