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National Park Service

News Release

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National Park Service Releases Dutch Creek Accident Investigation: Factual Report

WASHINGTON – The National Park Service released the full text of the *Accident Investigation: Factual Report for the Dutch Creek Fatality*, along with the corresponding Accident Review Board Safety Action Plan on November 3, 2009.

These reports address the accident which occurred on July 25, 2008; when firefighter Andrew “Andy” Palmer was fatally struck by a falling tree while assigned to the Eagle Fire, part of the Iron Complex on the Shasta Trinity National Forest in Northern California. At the time of the accident, Andy was employed as a firefighter at Olympic National Park in Port Angeles, Washington.

Upon release of the report, National Park Service Director Jon Jarvis stated, “This was a tragic accident and our hearts go out to the Palmer Family, his friends and his colleagues. Our intent in releasing this report is for all of us to learn from this incident in order to help prevent reoccurrences of this type of event in the future. This is how we will honor Andy, by remembering his commitment to self and colleagues. His passing should serve as a constant reminder to honor your fellow employees by watching out for their safety.”

The Accident Review Board Safety Action Plan from the Accident Investigation: Factual Report contains action items which address incident medical planning, risk management, and training and qualifications. This and other key documents relating to the incident is available at: <http://www.nps.gov/fire>, including the Preliminary Brief and Expanded Brief (respectively the 24 and 72 hour reports), and Questions & Answers (Q&A) Related to the Dutch Creek Investigation.

For copies of the reports and more information visit: www.nps.gov/fire.

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A Biography of Andrew Jackson Palmer

This information was updated and confirmed via e-mail on August 26, 2009 by Olympic National Park staff via contact with the Palmer family.

Andrew Jackson Palmer (Andy) was born in Port Angeles, Washington, on September 10, 1989 to Janet and Bob Palmer as their third son.

Andy attended the Children's Montessori School, Fairview and Franklin Elementary, Roosevelt Middle Schools in Port Angeles and Port Townsend High School. At 6'5" and 240 pounds, he was a natural for football and valued being part of the Port Townsend football team for four years. Bonfires on the beach, sporting clays, games of urban golf, fugitive, dark, ultimate Frisbee, baseball, weightlifting, reading and spending time with his many friends filled his days. Andy was a devoted Big Brother and had a little brother in the local community. He was very proud of his big red Dodge 2500 turbo diesel pickup truck and might be found out bucking hay for local farmers, working at A+ Rentals, Les Schwab, or, more recently, at Auto Works, all in Port Townsend.



Andrew "Andy" Jackson Palmer.

Andy is survived by his loving parents; brother Henry, brother Rob and sister-in-law Emily; grandparents Bob and Ina in Sequim; aunt Beverly and cousin Camille in Santa Barbara; aunt Marilyn of the Netherlands; family in Canada of aunt Cheryl and cousins Gayle in Kamloops, Karen and Grant in Iqaluit, Joyce and Josh in Florida; and many more.

Andy had an unerring sense of right and wrong since childhood. He will always be remembered as one who held himself to the highest principles of truth, fairness, justice and kindness. He was loyal, honest and trustworthy – loved by all that knew him. He will be missed but we will all be better for having known him. Andy would ask those who survive him to conduct their lives with integrity and compassion for a better world.

Andy died honorably as a firefighter for the National Park Service on the Iron Complex fire in the Shasta-Trinity National Forest near Weaverville, California, on Friday July 25th, 2008.

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