



**TO :**

**FROM :** National Wildfire Coordinating Group

**REPLY TO :** NWCG@nifc.gov

**DATE :** 05/12/2011

**SUBJECT :** SAFETY BULLETIN : Paynes Bay Fire Accident 24-Hour Report

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Attached is the 24-Hour Report for the Paynes Bay Fire accident which occurred on May 6, 2011. Please see that it receives wide distribution withi your agency. When available, other investigation documents, specifically the 72-Hour Report and the final Factual Report, will be posted on the Wildland Fire Lessons Learned Center database for incident reports and lessons learned analyses: (<http://www.wildfirelessons.net/Reviews.aspx>)



Paynes Bay Fire Accident 24 Hour Report\_5-7-11.pdf

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**United States Department of the Interior**  
**U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service**  
**Alligator River NWR**

**PRELIMINARY (24-HOUR) REPORT**

**THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION IS PRELIMINARY AND SUBJECT TO CHANGE**

**LOCATION:** Paynes Bay Fire, Manteo NC

**DATE OF OCCURRENCE:** May 6, 2011

**TIME OF OCCURRENCE:** Approximately 1525 EST

**ACTIVITY:** Wildfire Suppression

**NARRATIVE:**

On May 6, 2011, at approximately 1525, an incident involving a Fish and Wildlife Service dual tired pick-up truck, Marsh Master, and Marsh Master Trailer occurred. Significant damage to the truck was observed. No personnel injuries were reported.

At approximately 1525, 2 FWS firefighters (2-FF's), traveled South on US-264 to retrieve a Marsh Master and bring it to the next operational assignment. The fire on the west side of the road was not a threat to road traffic; however, numerous spot fires between the road and canal had ignited multiple guard rail posts. The 2-FF's notified the Engine Boss of the FWS engine about the guard rails. The 2-FF's proceeded to their assignment of moving the Marsh Master.

The FWS Engine Boss began extinguishing the guard rail posts and soon noticed a wind shift and change in fire behavior, at which time he relocated to a safe area to the north. At approximately 1605, the 2-FF's were heading north on US-264 with the pick-up truck and Marsh Master when the FWS Engine Boss attempted to stop the 2-FF's via radio communication with no success. When radio contact was made the 2-FF's were too far down the road to stop. Heavy smoke, narrow shoulders, and guard rails made it impossible to turn around with the equipment trailer. The 2-FF's were in a situation where the safest decision was to continue traveling north.

The fire, responding to a wind shift and influences from the hot fire on the east side of the road, began leaning over the road. The 2-FF's pushed through and the truck sustained damage when various materials, including but not limited to drip torches and torch fuel, caught fire. The Marsh Master sustained damage from debris. The 2-FF's cleared the fire and the vehicle fires were extinguished once it was safe to stop.

No injuries were reported. There was extensive paint and plastic damage to the truck. The plexi glass window in the Marsh Master was damaged.

A review team has been established and will issue a 72-hour report followed by a final report. This is in accordance with the 2011 Standards for Fire and Fire Aviation Operations Handbook.

**PREPARED BY:** Vince Carver, Regional Fire Ecologist and Kelley Van Druten, District 1 Wildland Urban Interface Coordinator