

Staff Ride

Resources



Wildland Fire Leadership Development Program

Mann Gulch Fire – Person of Interest Assignment

Staff Ride Attendees:

Staff rides represent a unique and persuasive method of conveying the lessons of the past to the present day fire leader for current application. Properly conducted, these exercises bring to life, on the very terrain where historic decisions were made, examples, applicable today as in the past, of tactics and strategy, as well as the very human elements of leadership, communications and above all else the dynamics of how we make choices.

Perhaps one of the more exceptional opportunities that exists within the nature of a Staff Ride, is the ability to “walk in someone else’s shoes...” to suspend our hindsight knowledge and empathize with what it may have been like to be in the crux of the decision making processes during critical, time sensitive events such as the Mann Gulch tragedy. It is our intent to connect with these men, and to learn from the decisions made on that piece of ground that day.

Your pre-work reading assignments are very important elements for making the staff ride an effective learning experience. We intend to couple the theoretical experience with a personal connection to the men that were on Mann Gulch that day, and the key decision makers associated with the event. All of these men were important. Therefore, each of the “Men of Mann Gulch” will be given their time through assignments to the Staff Ride Attendees. Each attendee will be assigned a Person of Interest (POI) to discover and connect with prior to and during your time in Mann Gulch. See your assignment below.

As you study the pre work materials you've received, we ask that you make an effort to view the events from the perspectives of the decision makers on the ground on August 5, 1949, and specifically from your crew member's point of view. In addition, we provide links to other materials which may provide more information on your person of interest. We encourage you to utilize whatever means you are able to discover as much as possible about your POI. During the staff ride, each person’s story will be shared by staff ride participants.

Personal profiles were compiled for Mann Gulch participants in a document developed by Helena High School students -- *High School X-CEL Class Mann Gulch Remembered, 50th Anniversary*. Please review the profile of your POI and consider the following:

What specific kinds of thoughts, emotions, and feelings might have been going on for that person at that specific time and place?

Who was this person beyond Mann Gulch and wildland fire? What kind of background, family, part of the country, friends, personality, temperament, etc did this person have?

How can you make this person’s story matter for the staff ride participants through your telling of the story?

The profiles can be accessed online at:

https://www.nifc.gov/safety/mann_gulch/memorial/documents/Mann_Gulch_Remembered_50th_Aniversary_August_5_1999.pdf

This document is a PDF file that typically opens up in Adobe Acrobat Reader.

Your Person of Interest is: _____