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Incident Name:

Date: July 14, 1988, about 1140 hours

Personnel: David Alfred Schas, Forest Service employee

Age: 62

Agency/Organization: aircraft privately owned and under contract to the US Forest Service

Position: smokejumper aircraft pilot

Summary: On July 14, 1988 David Schas -- pilot of the smokejumper Twin Otter -- headed out from Redmond, Oregon Air Center to John Day, Oregon to pick up smokejumpers. Their ultimate destination was to fight fires burning near Miles City, Montana. Before reaching John Day, the Twin Otter with only David aboard, crashed 2 mi north of Battle Creek Mountain on the east side of Ochoco National Forest. David Schas perished.



Maps

John Day, OR airport, destination of the Twin Otter

```
{mosmap lat='44.402274'|lon='-118.967199'|marker='0'|text='John Day, OR airport'}
```

Crash site: approximately 40 mi west John Day, OR, several ridges away on approach to the airport; more specifically, approximately 2 mi north of Battle Creek Mountain on the east side of Ochoco National Forest.

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Reports, Documentation, Lessons Learned

- **Concise Information from the [USFS](#) and research by the WLF Staff:**
- July 14, 1988, Twin Otter
- 1 killed: David Alfred Schas
- Operator: aircraft privately owned and under contract to the Forest Service
- Type: DeHavilland DHC-6 300 Twin Otter
- Location: 40 mi west of John Day, OR
- FAA Registration # unknown
- NTSB # none; [NTSB query page](#)

- NTSB did not conduct the investigation; the US Forest Service did.
- Flight Safety Foundation (flightsafety.org): [Flight Safety Digest, Vol 18, No. 4, April 1999](#) , US Aerial Firefighting Accidents Involving Fixed Wing Aircraft 1976-1998, page 18 (218 K pdf)

- USFS: Fatal Aviation Accident History [2 page Excerpt](#) pp 98-99 (329 K pdf) | [112 page Full Report](#)
(all accidents: 4,017 K pdf)

- USFS: Probable Cause

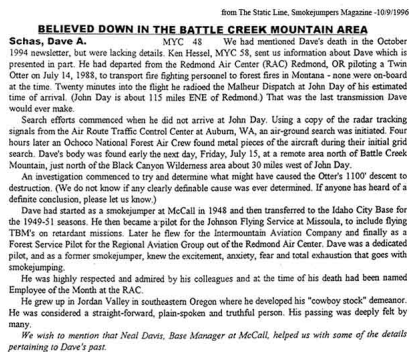
The most probable cause of this mishap was determined to be the pilot's acute in-flight incapacitation due to sleep.

- Note: Prior to 1996 NTSB did not investigate Gov owned and operated, Gov owned and contractor operated or some aircraft that were privately owned and operated as "public aircraft". Government agency investigations and reports were/are often hard to find and access. The "[Pressler Act](#)", passed in 1995 and enacted in 1996, changed that, making all aircraft accident reports easier to access and lessons easier to learn. (Click the link and search on "Pressler".)

- release of name of pilot



- US Forest Service Heroes Memorial: [David Alfred Schas](#) (scroll down to 1988)
- [Smoke Jumpers Staticline publication, 1996](#) (entire download is 5 MB pdf) Excerpt from p 5 is below:



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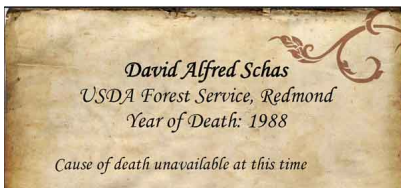
Media Articles and Reports

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Photos, Videos, & Tributes

- Smokejumper Obituary: [David Schas](#)
- David Schas, [Oregon Memorial Website](#) , Oregon Memorial Plaque



- USFA Memorial Database: [David Alfred Schas](#) ; David is memorialized on the National Firefighters Wall.

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Contributors to this article: John Miller



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