

Incident Summary Page for the Hotshot Crew Line of Duty Death

Name of Hotshots LODD: Brent Witham	Incident Name: Lolo Peak Fire
	Incident Date & Time: 08/02/2017
Hotshot Crew: Vista Grande	Incident Location: Lolo National Forest, Montana
Personal Information	
<p>Brent, age 29, was a six season wildland firefighter, the last three years with the Vista Grande Hotshot Crew. He is survived by his father a retired sheriff, his mother an Army veteran, his stepfather, a sister, grandparents, and an aunt and uncle.</p> <p>Sections of State Highway 38 in San Bernardino County, California and US Highway 12, near Lolo Pass in Montana, were named in his honor.</p>	
Brief description	
<p>On August 2, Vista Grande Hotshot Brent Witham was struck and killed when falling a tree while working on the lightning sparked Lolo Peak Fire, Lolo National Forest, Montana. He was a part of four two-person teams tasked with cutting down dead trees along a road that was to be used as a fire break. Around 14:30 the 50 foot tall and 15 inch diameter Whitebark pine snag he was working on broke from its hinge and fell 100 degrees off target and on Brent's escape route. Hearing a loud "pop" Witham, after pausing, chose an uphill escape route. The tree struck him 28 feet from where he had been cutting. He was given CPR and other emergency medical aid by fellow firefighters and was then airlifted to a hospital in Missoula, Montana. Despite all efforts, Witham passed away as a result of his injuries.</p>	
Links to more information on this incident:	
<p> https://wlfalwaysremember.net/2017/08/02/brent-witham/ https://lessonslearned-prod-media-bucket.s3.us-gov-west-1.amazonaws.com/s3fs-public/irdoc/2017LoloPeakNarrative508.pdf https://lessonslearned-prod-media-bucket.s3.us-gov-west-1.amazonaws.com/s3fs-public/2023-02/Lolo.mp4 https://lessons.fs2c.usda.gov/incident/lolo-peak-fire-tree-strike-fatality-2017 https://wildfiretoday.com/tag/brent-witham/ https://www.pressenterprise.com/2020/04/30/stretch-of-highway-38-named-in-memory-of-mentone-firefighter-who-died-in-2017-blaze/ https://missoulacurrent.com/firefighters-highway/ </p>	



Highway 38 in San Bernardino County, California



US Highway 12 near Lolo Pass, Montana

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