

HOWARD FOREST HELITACK BASE

The Howard Forest Helitack Base was originally established in 1972 in Laytonville until 1981 when it was moved to its current location five miles south of Willits in the CDF Mendocino Unit.

Howard Forest logs an average of 412 flight hour calls per year and responds to fires and rescues. The helicopter at Howard Forest was one of the first used to perform short haul rescues and it has performed more of these types of rescues than any other CDF ship. The crew of Howard Forest consists of two pilots, three fire captains, and nine firefighters. In addition to the *helitack crew there are two fire engines staffed at Howard Forest Station located at Unit Headquarters. Howard Forest Helitack operates a UH-1H helicopter. Also operated out of Howard Forest Helitack Base is the helitender, which serves as a support vehicle for the copter. The helitender contains 1,000 gallons of fuel, along with foam, backup tools, out-of-county bags, an extra bucket, paperwork, Meals Ready to Eat (MRE's) and many other items that are necessary to support the crew.



Howard Forest covers a 50-mile initial attack response area that encompasses over 2.8 million acres of state responsibility area (SRA), and over 730,000 acres of US Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management lands.

*CDF helitack crews consist of highly trained and experienced firefighters who are assigned to and respond to wildland fires aboard CDF helicopters. Once arriving on an incident the crew, typically 5 to 6 firefighters along with a fire captain, are let off with fire fighting hand tools and initiate fire suppression actions. Helitack crews also perform other helicopter support operations when not assigned to direct fire line operations such as helibase operations and support.

*For information about other helitack bases,
visit the **Air Program** page of the
CDF website:
www.fire.ca.gov*



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