



U.S. Forest Service

San Bernardino National Forest

602 S. Tippecanoe

San Bernardino, CA 92408

Web: <https://www.fs.usda.gov/sbnf/>

News Release

September 21, 2020

Media Contact: Zach Behrens

(909) 382-2788

zachary.behrens@usda.gov



Loss of Big Bear Interagency Hotshot

SAN BERNARDINO, Calif., September 21, 2020 – It is with deep sadness that USDA Forest Service officials on the San Bernardino National Forest announce the death of Charles Morton, a Big Bear Interagency Hotshot Squad Boss, who died while engaged in fire suppression operations on the [El Dorado Fire](#) late Thursday, September 17, 2020.

“Charlie was a well-respected leader who was always there for his squad and his crew at the toughest times,” said U.S. Forest Service Chief Vicki Christiansen. “Our hearts go out to Charlie’s loved ones, coworkers, friends and the Big Bear Hotshots. We will keep them in our thoughts and prayers.”

Charlie was born on August 7, 1981, in San Diego, California. He started his career in 2002 as Corpsman with the California Conservation Corps at the Butte Fire Center in Magalia, moving to the 2006 fire season with Firestorm Fire Suppression in Chico. His 14-year Forest Service career began in 2006 with the Truckee Interagency Hotshots on the Tahoe National Forest. Charlie then joined the San Bernardino National Forest in 2007 and worked on both the Front Country and Mountaintop Ranger Districts, for the Mill Creek Interagency Hotshots, Engine 31, Engine 19, and the Big Bear Interagency Hotshots.

The San Bernardino National Forest is grateful for the support that has been extended through this tragic event. Cards and condolences may be sent to the Morton family at: P.O. Box 63564, Irvine, CA 92602. For FedEx and/or UPS: 1 League # 63564, Irvine, CA 92602 in care of “Support for Charlie.”

The family has asked us to share that, “Charlie is survived by his wife and daughter, his parents, two brothers, cousins, and friends. He’s loved and will be missed. May he rest easy in heaven with his baby boy.”

The cause of the El Dorado Fire is being investigated by CAL FIRE and reported as human-caused. The San Bernardino National Forest will share further information as it becomes available.

