TORNADO PROJECT SUMMARY SHEET

1. DATE AND TIME Saturday Aug 16 58 4:00 pm PDT (300 PST)

2. LOCATION OR PATH (attach map) Douglas Lake (Merritt)

3. PATH LENGTH ☑ NOT KNOWN ☐ <1mi; ☐ 1-4mi; ☐ 5-10mi; ☐ 11-50mi; ☐ LENGTH IF>50

4. PATH WIDTH ☐ 5. TORNADO PART OF SQUALL LINE? ☐ YES; ☐ NO; ☐ UNKNOWN

6. ANY UNUSUAL COLORATION? ☐ YES; ☐ NO; ☐ UNKNOWN

7. ANY UNUSUAL SOUND? ☐ YES; ☐ NO; ☐ UNKNOWN

8. IF ANSWER TO 6 OR 7 YES, ELABORATE;

9. LIST ANY ASSOCIATED PHENOMENA (Such as hail, vivid lightning heavy rain, no rain, etc.) associated with a forest fire

10. TOTAL DAMAGE ESTIMATE $ U 11. TOTAL DEATHS 0

12. TOTAL INJURED 8 13. TOTAL HOMELESS 0

14. LIST ALL REFERENCES

Daily Province Aug 19 '58
The Colonist Aug 19 '58
Kamloops Daily Sentinel Aug 19 '58

15. SUMMARIZE REMARKS PERTAINING TO (a) FUNNEL; (b) INTERESTING OR CAPRICIOUS EVENTS.

- sent two men to hospital in critical condition with burns to 75% of their bodies
- tornado came out of the forest fire then swept across a field

WORKSHEET

IDTO 10958-01

(1) ORIGIN x 10706000

y 5565000

(2) LIFT-OFF x_1

y_1

(3) $(x_1 - x)$ =

(4) $(y - y_1)$ =

(5) Standard Error S_x

σ = 150.0

(6) Standard Error S_y

(7) DAMAGE LENGTH

$$L = [(x_1 - x)^2 + (y - y_1)^2]^{1/2}$$

(8) $\alpha = \tan^{-1} \dfrac{|y - y_1|}{|x - x_1|}$

(3)+(4) $\boxed{\rightarrow r, \theta}$ =

$\boxed{x \leftrightarrow y}$ =

(9) Standard Error $S_L = (S_x^2 + S_y^2)^{1/2}$

(5)+(6) $\boxed{\rightarrow r, \theta}$ =

(10) $\beta = \dfrac{\tan^{-1} S_L}{L}$

(7)+(9) $\boxed{\rightarrow r, \theta}$

$\boxed{x \leftrightarrow y}$ =

NE quad $\phi = 90 - \alpha$

NW quad $\phi = 270 + \alpha$

SW quad $\phi = 270 - \alpha$

SE quad $\phi = 90 + \alpha$

(11) ϕ =

Storm Date:
Sunday Aug 17 '58

The Daily Province

August 19, 1958

Page 1

3 Hurt by freak twister

A freak whirlwind that struck in the midst of a B.C. forest fire sent two men to hospital with critical burns and hurled an 8-year-old boy 50 feet.

The near-fatal phenomenon occurred at Douglas Lake, near Merritt, as men struggled to control a fire in a hayfield.

IT'S THOUGHT the heat of the fire helped start the whirlwind.

Firefighter Vera MacDonald, 16, and Gordon Fraser, 60, are in critical condition in Nicola Valley General Hospital at Merritt.

MacDonald and Fraser were caught in driving flames and were unable to escape until burns covered about 75 per cent of their bodies.

The unidentified 8-year-old escaped injury when he was thrown up in the air and flung down again.

OTHER MEN suffered small injuries owing to the force of the wind, which flung 200-pound bales of hay into the air.

Other firefighters brought the blaze under control Monday after it burned through valuable timber.

FIRE HAZARD dropped to moderate in some other sections of B.C. Monday, but forest service officers warned campfires are permitted only in designated areas.

At least one of the 19 new blazes in the Vancouver district was blamed on an abandoned campfire.

THE MAJOR fire 20 miles southeast of Chilliwack is out of control in steep country at the 3,000-foot level. Firefighters can't get at it.

Higher humidity at nights is a factor in bringing other fires under control.

The Colonist

August 19, 1958

Page 1

Battling B.C. Blaze

Fiery Tornado Engulfs Men

MERRIT, B.C. (CP) — A fiery baby tornado sent two men to hospital Sunday, reports reaching this centre south of Kamloops said Monday.

It roared out of a forest fire in the Douglas Lake Cattle Company rangeland, enveloping two firefighters in flames.

Others fled for their lives.

In Nicola Valley General Hospital in critical conditions are Vern MacDonald, 16, and Gordon Fraser, 60. Burns cover 75 per cent of their bodies. They were hurled into the air like flaming torches by the twister.

The small twisters, called "dust devils" on the prairies and in the Washington-Oregon dry country, seldom occur in B.C.

Tornado Flings Human Torches

The Kamloops Daily Sentinel.

August 19, 1958.
page 1

Ranch Hands In Hospital

Two men are in critical condition at Nicola General Hospital today after falling victim to a small tornado and being enveloped in flame on Douglas Lake Cattle Company property near Merritt.

They are Vern MacDonald, 18, and Gordon Fraser, 60, both of the Douglas Lake Cattle Company. A third man, D. Sabo, received less serious burns and is recovering at the Home Ranch.

The incident occurred at 4 p.m. Saturday as a crew of ranch workers attempted to prevent flames from a forest fire from spreading to a hay meadow about 10 miles east of the Home Ranch and two miles west of Chaperon Ranch, near Chaperon Lake.

From the hay meadow on which the fire crew were working, a second large hay meadow is divided by a creek.

Lawrence Graham, foreman, said the tornado was "pretty hard to describe."

"The fire was burning pretty well—we had firefighters right on the fire front.

"Then the twister worked up and came sweeping down on the men. I saw it all. It seemed like a small tornado—a big ball of fire."

The tornado swept across the first hay meadow, leapt the creek, and then into the second field of hay.

"It was chasing me for a time. I had no alternative but to get into a car and run for it," Mr. Graham said.

PAIR CAUGHT

Other members of the fire crew also ran for their lives but the two injured men were caught before they could reach the safety of the creek. They were hurled into the air like flaming torches. Burns cover 70 per cent of their bodies.

Once it had crossed the creek, the tornado created havoc in the second hay meadow. 200 bales of hay, weighing 50 pounds each, were hurled into the air and carried between eight and 10 miles before finally falling to the ground.

Douglas Lake men are still fighting the flames today, attempting to save another 600-acre hay field from destruction.

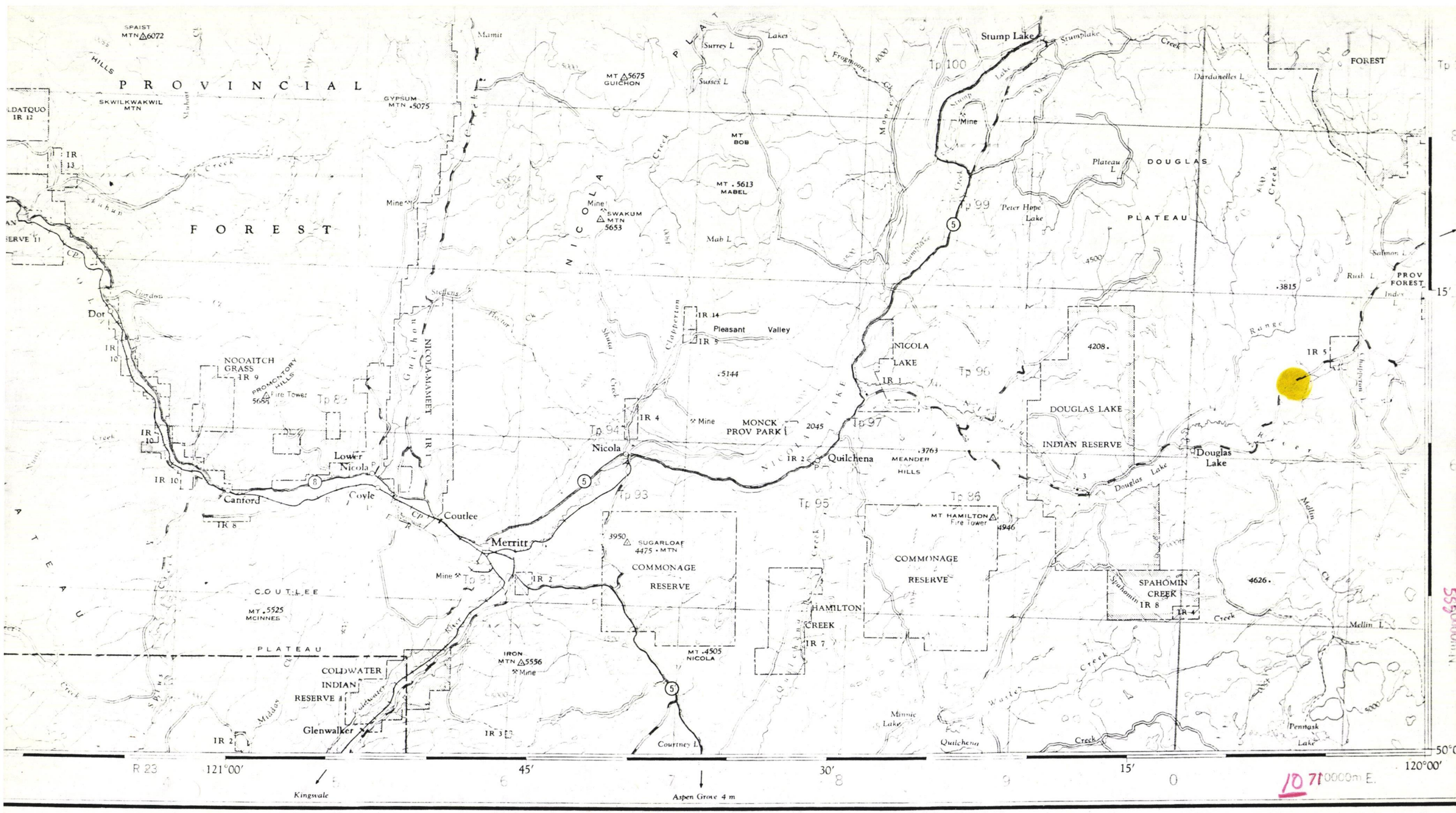
On August 16, 1958, a small tornado swept onto a Douglas Lake Cattle Company hay meadow about ten miles east of the Douglas Lake "Home Ranch" and two miles west of Chaperon Ranch, near Chaperon Lake. At 4:00 pm the tornado "worked up and came sweeping down"[1] upon a four man crew attempting to prevent a forest fire from reaching the meadow.

The tornado moved across one field, jumped a creek and carried on along a second field. Foreman Lawrence Graham escaped in a car. Of the others, D. Sabo reached the creek and escaped with serious burns. Vern MacDonald (16) and Gordon Fraser(60) were caught and "hurled into the air like flaming torches,"[2] receiving burns covering 75% of their bodies. The tornado carried 200 fifty pound hay bales up to ten miles through the air from the second meadow. Fraser and MacDonald later died from their burns.

1 The Kamloops Daily Sentinel, August 19, 1958, p. 1.
2 Ibid.

Sources:

The Kamloops Daily Sentinel, August 19, 1958, p. 1.



ASHCROFT

Projection Transverse de Mercator
Réseau géodésique nord-américain unifié (1927)
Équidistance des courbes: 500 pieds
Élévations en pieds au-dessus du niveau moyen de la mer

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