



# Northwest Colorado Fire Management Unit



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**For Immediate Release**  
**Saturday, June 27, 2009**

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## ***BLM engine captain killed in tree removal accident***

**CRAIG, Colo.**— A Bureau of Land Management firefighter was killed yesterday in an accident working a hazard-tree removal project.

Brett Stearns, 29, of Craig, Colo., was killed during a hazard tree abatement project at Freeman Reservoir, 15 miles northeast of Craig. The accident is currently under investigation.

Stearns was working on the project with about 12 other BLM firefighters when he was struck by a falling tree at approximately 4:30 p.m. Friday. He was pronounced dead on-scene.

Stearns was an engine captain and had worked in the fire program for the BLM Little Snake Field Office in Craig since 1999. He is survived by his wife, mother, father, one brother, and half sister.

Little Snake Field Manager John Husband said, "On behalf of the Little Snake Field Office and the Northwest Colorado Interagency Fire Management Unit, I offer my condolences to the family and friends of Brett Stearns. He dedicated his life to protecting the lives and property of the public. Firefighting is a dangerous profession and firefighter safety is the number one priority on fires and projects such as this. A detailed investigation is being conducted by a federal accident investigation team."

-BLM-