BLACK HILLS NATIONAL FOREST
AVIATION MGT. PROGRAM
BLACK HILLS HELITACK BASE

HELITACK IS A COINDED WORD DERIVED FROM “HELICOPTER” AND “ATTACK.”
THIS BASE IS THE HEADQUARTERS FOR A HELICOPTER AND FIVE MAN CREW WHOSE
MISSION IS TO ATTACK FOREST FIRES BEFORE THEY GET BIG.
THE HELICOPTER IS ALSO EMPLOYED ON LARGE FIRES FOR SCOUTING
AND DELIVERY OF MEN TO REMOTE PLACES ON THE FIRE LINE.
THE “COPTER’S” UNIQUE QUALIFICATIONS ARE EMPLOYED IN SPRAYING
HERBICIDES TO IMPROVE NATIONAL FOREST CATTLE AND SHEEP RANGES
AND FOR EARLY DETECTION OF INSECT INFESTATIONS WHICH CAN AND
HAVE DEVASTATED OUR FOREST.
YOU ARE INVITED TO TOUR OUR BASE.
1959 – 1993 Hill City
1994 – Present Custer Co. Airport (K CUT)
Helitack Program Overview

• 105 MAP (Mandatory Availability Period) annually
• 7-10 person Helitack Module (USFS Employees)
• Type 3 Helicopter (Vendor Operated)
• 2 Helicopter Support Vehicles
• USFS Owned Hangar (Built 1980 for USFS Lead Plane)
• Leased property from Custer County (1980-2030, 50 Year)
Helitack Missions

- Wildland Firefighting
  - Personnel Transport / Aerial Delivery
  - Water delivery
  - External Cargo
  - Intelligence and Reconnaissance
- Prescribed Fire
  - Aerial Ignition
- Natural Resource Missions
- Search and Rescue
Helitack Missions Cont’d

Water Delivery

Aerial Ignition
Statistics on Average

• 8,160 Wildfire Acres Burned Annually (BKF)
• 90 – 100 Initial Attack Fires per Year Locally
• 5-10 Large Fire Support Assignments Nationally

Statistics for 2018

• 170.6 HRS. Flight Time
• 79,485 Gal. Water Delivered
• 565 Passengers Transported
• 38,099 Lbs. Cargo Delivered
Rapid City AirTanker Base
Rapid City AirTanker Base

- Located at Rapid City Regional Airport
- 2 permanent USFS Staff
- Supplemented by Call-When-Needed personnel
  - Aircraft Timekeepers
  - Ramp Manager
  - Parking Tender
- Contracted Mix & Load Crew
- Fully staffed 120 days (minimum) 1 June – 30 Sept annually
- Capable of supporting all Next-Gen Large Air Tankers (LAT) including USAF Modular Airborne Fire Fighting System (MAFFS)
Rapid City AirTanker Base Cont’d

- Capable of supporting all Next-Gen Large Air Tankers (LAT) including USAF Modular Airborn Fire Fighting System (MAFFS)
- Single Engine Air Tanker (SEAT) loading capability with Variable Frequency Drive (VFD)
- Capable of supporting 6 LATs at any one time
- 180,000 gallons of fire retardant on hand
- Capable of supporting incidents within 300 NM
Rapid City AirTanker Base Cont’d
Future?
Questions?