

7/30/2006 Radio Transcript

July 30th 2006 (This day in History) "RED FLAG IS OUT"

"Ramapo--- Sterling- on ch 9A I have a smoke sighted Wanaque area, I can see the route 287 bridge- looks to be under it!(!?)

"Sterling--- Ramapo- on ch 9A I still can't see that 500 acre fire in Harriman ?

Culvers---Sterling on ch 7 can you see a smoke to your north along the ridge ?

Sterling ...Culvers on ch 7 "Yeah it's bobbin up and down ! but pretty sure it's in New York!"

Culvers---Sterling on Ch 7 "I'm in New York ! could you help me locate it please"?

Sterling....Culvers on Ch 7 "Oh !...OK...yeah it's still boppin up and down !"

Culvers....Sterling on ch 7 "Thanks"

Sterling from Balsam Lake on Sam's Point..... I got a visual on a "sparkling smoke" South toward Pennsylvania....

Balsam Lake....Sterling, Sam's Point ..."too far for me, give me your degree reading"

Balsam Lake...Sterling , Sam's Point " your read & mine cross on Route 97 near the Hawk's nest bend on the Delaware"

Sterling...Balsam Lake, Sam's Point... "confirmed it's a hard-rock drill rig that burned out & set brush afire...Ranger going"

Sterling tower....New Paltz on Sam's Point "are we spotting fires in Pennsylvania now?"

New Paltz...Sterling....Sam's Point, "fire IS in New York Sullivan County Region 3"

Sterling tower from New Paltz Sam's Point "Do they need anymore help on that 500 acre fire in Harriman?"

New Paltz...Sterling tower , Sam's Point " Tyrrell says they have LOST-IT!, are pulling people out for safety"

M4 to Sterling tower...on maintenance.... "who do we contact in New Jersey for aircraft assistance?"

M4...Sterling..."request being put through by Milton tower"

M4....Sterling "New Jersey says New York will have to expend all their resources before assistance can be given"

Sterling.....M4 "Forget previous request!"

M-45 to Sterling "I'm transplanting shrubs as I speak! It's getting ugly over here, advise New Paltz, wind up the Albany chopper!"

Sterling-New Paltz , Sam's Point.... "M-4 is aloft with 44 control in Rockland's helio"

Spring Valley, New York issues "Mobile Field-force alert- all responders"

Sterling tower... Bear Mtn Park police on your frequency; fire is now 700 + acres no control, humidity 2% wind NW 10-15mph

NY Forest Rangers enroute from Catskills, Raybrook (Adirondack hdqtrs) also sending a unit.

M-45),M-46,M-47,M-48 ,M-4(Chief Ranger) ,3704, 3705,3706,375(Lietenant),373(Captain), Sterling Rangers dispatched with 6X6, Leroy has 15 man crew & a dozer from Bear Mountain shop. Requesting Orange-Correctional crew. 2 volunteers from New Jersey also responding. Have 2nd smoke, Camp Darby area, West Point Military Academy, Mineral Springs Road area, could be "slop-over" from previous 1800 acre fire at Storm King Mtn. 50 acre field fire West town, NY also mutual aide, all towns in Orange County, Sullivan County sending a crew.(fire was stopped using paved roads as fire-breaks)...Orange County issues Mutual-Aide alert, all Community Fire Departments to stand-by in quarters.

****Meanwhile- have 30 hikers here at the fire tower, oblivious to what is going on. One gentleman pokes his head through the trap door and asks' "Do you ever see a fire from up here or just come up to hang out ?" I motion him to come up in the cab where I wave my hand toward Harriman State Park and West Point and then New Jersey..... question, answered.!***

American Flag is "standing straight-out" in the wind and beginning to fray...took down to save it, ran up Red Flag which draws curious stares from visitors....Aerometer on weather monitor reading 21 mphr at 60' height of tower cab.RH 3% Temp. 83 degrees. Can only keep one window open to prevent everything from blowing out of the cab. Dark blue waters of Sterling Lake makes a stark contrast with high strato-cumulus clouds. Far off beyond Scunnimunk Mountain 20 miles north, a darker cloud could bring a late evening shower that will help out here.

M-46 truck disabled, broken tie-rod- fire all around us!... M4 "push it off the road if possible, wet the area down with whatever you have!"

“M-45 on the Lichen Trail with pulaski- using it for fire-break, don’t think it will hold!”

M-4(Chief Ranger) to crew “pull off to safe areas....Leroy bringing dozer up...

3704...Sterling on F-1; “new fire behind bus garage on old route 17

Hillburn.....spreading up gas line right-of-way (not park property)

“beyond that is Mahwah, New Jersey... (they will have to expend all their resources before assistance can be given”) 3704 responds anyway to assess the situation. (Hillburn NY Fire Department gets fire under-control halfway up the hill)

9 P.M. “flames still visible on Harriman fire...fire-breaks seem to be holding..” A long day....people are tired but doggedly won’t quit.

6 A.M. July 31st.... 4 separate fires in Harriman have now joined together into 1 with some breakouts. Mineral Springs Road, Camp Darby was actually a separate 6 acre fire. 2 other small fires near Island Pond road, Appalachian Trail crossing. Downed electric wire at Black Ash Swamp caused 11 acre fire late in day. 83 hikers visited the tower today from 10 A.M. to 4 P.M.

Red Flag warning (Extreme) Red flag attached to Fire Danger sign draws curious questions from hikers.

46 truck repaired, driven out of woods under it’s own power, dozers still working fire breaks, relief crew coming in.

Ranger Command center set up at Kannawalki parking lot. Raybrook (ADK) crew at Island Pond.

West Town, NY field fire 125+ acres, under control.

Large fire at Camp Smith, across the Hudson River, Putnam County. Army Blackhawk copter making water drops along the Appalachian Trail there.

Several fires in Dutchess County Region 3 and also Region 4. Volunteer observer at Ninham Fire Tower from local Fire Department. Fires also on Long Island heard over State-wide channel, Region 1

Today and tomorrow, my days’ off but will stay here for Extreme Fire Danger “Red Flag remains out”

The dark “rain cloud spotted” ran away toward Columbia County eastward...

2 days later- a weather inversion brought “Spruce smoke and floating ash in the air currents” from an 800 hectare forest fire in Quebec, Canada, a pall of smoke

was seen drifting all the way to Rockland County and beyond. The smoke reminded me of the Maine woods but had a sinister meaning.