



(BOOK 2)

The Esperanza Fire

Author: John Maclean

I was midway through reading this book about a tragic wildfire in California in 2006 when the news broke of the even worse wildfire disaster in Arizona that claimed the lives of an entire unit of 19 expert fire fighters. This served to heighten even further my interest in this book. It tells the story in great detail of how the crew of Engine 57 were overwhelmed by the wildfire that was started on 26th October, 2006 in the San Jacinto Mountains. Engine 57 crewed by five experienced men was a part of the US Forest Service fire fighting attack upon the fire. By the time the fire was eventually brought under control, the crew of Engine 57 were dead, 41,000 acres of forest and about 30 houses were burned.

Maclean describes in carefully researched detail how the fire was fought and investigated. He goes on to tell of the criminal proceedings that followed the fire and the deaths. The Esperanza fire was the first time in history that an entire Engine crew lost their lives at a wildfire.

I recommend this book for many reasons, not the least of which is that reading it pays tribute to those fire fighters who have given their lives in the line of duty.

JOHN CRAIG

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