



Tractor logging loads are loaded off a spur road



Loaded log trucks travel up steep windy roads before reaching any of the paved roads

Logging started up in the Mutton Mountains June 16 and damaged logs, resulting from the 1996 Simnasho fire, are being hauled out.

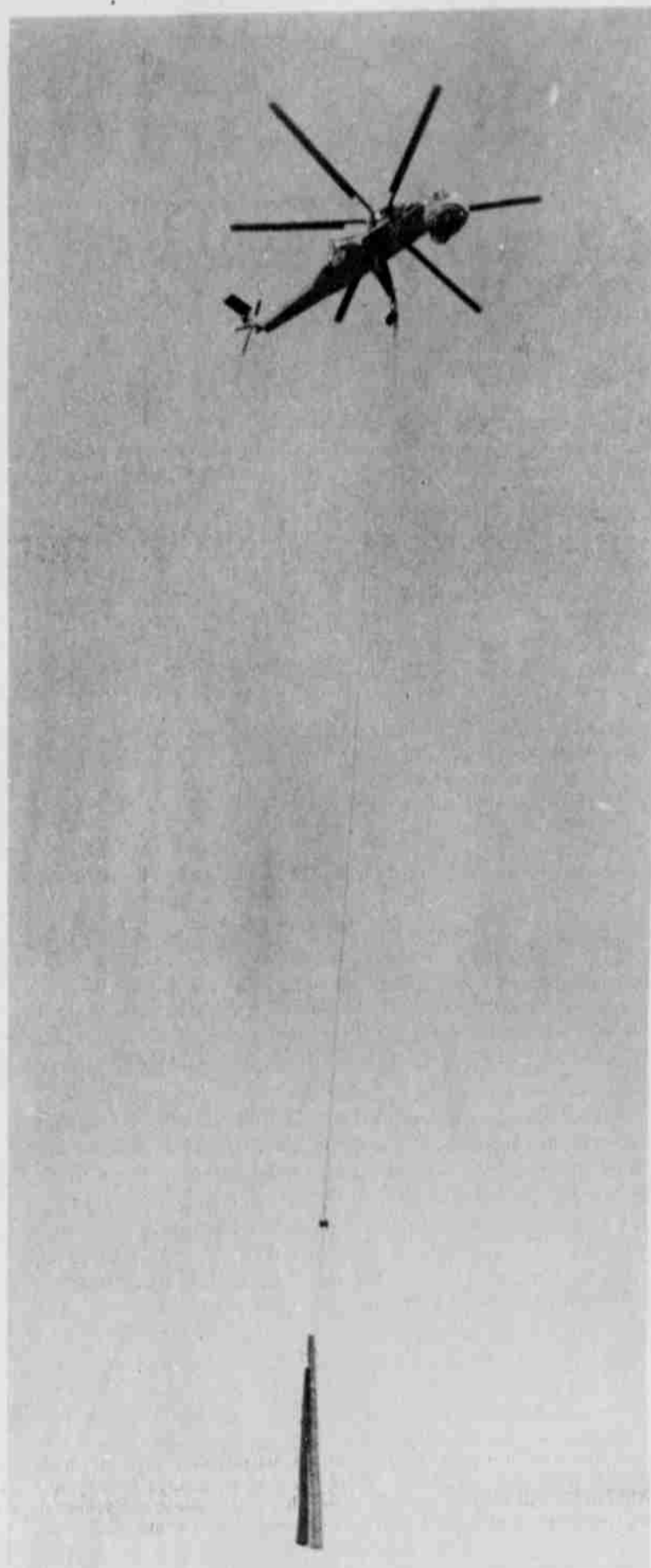
"Large helicopters with long cables are being used to gather the logs in the steep terrain where roads don't exist and trucks are unable to get in," says Timber sale officer Dan Brisbois. "We have workers on the ground setting chokers that are attached to the logs and are picked up every few minutes." The ground chokers, which sometimes carry up to ten logs, are then attached to a long helicopter cable. The helicopter then takes the logs and drops them off at a not-too-distant log deck where they are loaded on log trucks. "We're averaging fifty-plus loads each day by using a helicopter. So far, 809 loads have been hauled out. It could have been more, but logging trucks have been kind of scarce lately. The helicopter contractor (Ericksons Helicopters) has contracted Young and Morgan trucking out of Molalla, so the number of loads should start picking up soon," says Brisbois.

According to Louise K. Jackson, Forestry timber sales accountant, the Simnasho fire helicopter logging contract started June 16, 1997. So far, the total timber volume removed by helicopter as of the end of July is 4,007,670 board feet of ponderosa pine, Douglas fir and some noble and very little white pine. JR Smith of Warm Springs is conducting tractor logging in the same area and has hauled 373 loads totaling 1,472,420 board feet. Between both logging contracts, the total volume of timber removed so far is 5,479,990 board feet and 1,183 truck loads.

According to BIA Timber Sales Supervisor Dan O'Brien, "weather permitting, we expect to harvest five million board feet on the tractor logging contract and seventeen million board feet with the helicopter logging contract.

"Most of the small timber comes to the Warm Springs Forest Products Industries and The Dalles mill. Some of the large stuff goes to Crown Pacific in Prineville, Molalla Forest Products and the Avison Mill," says O'Brien.

Local residents are discouraged from driving in the area while logging is being conducted.



Large helicopter flies in logs every five to ten minutes



Results of the 1996 Simnasho fire



Log decks are piled near each timber sale unit



A helibase is used to refuel the helicopter near the logging areas