

Kootenai County Fire & Rescue

Office of the Fire Chief

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August 9, 2023

Re: Parkway Fire – Post Falls, Idaho

Dear Colleagues,

Thank you is often never enough and this is certainly the case regarding the response, starting last Friday, to the Parkway Fire in Post Falls. However, thank you is where we would like to begin. On behalf of the Kootenai County Fire and Rescue (KCFR) Board of Commissioners, the KCFR Command Staff/Personnel and most importantly the citizens of our Fire District, THANK YOU for your tremendous efforts to help to mitigate what could have been a disaster of historic proportions for our community.

In my 31-year career in emergency services, I have rarely seen a finer example of teamwork and effort put in by so many jurisdictions, agencies and disciplines to save lives and property. The 911 Dispatchers, Structural Firefighters, Wildland Firefighters, Law Enforcement Officers, Aircraft Pilots/Crews, City/County/Highway District Employees and volunteers who provided resources during the incident performed in a truly heroic fashion and it was truly the difference between some inconvenience for the citizens and some lost forested land versus the loss of life and/or significant property. In the end, 80 acres of beautiful city park were burned but NO injuries or fatalities happened as a result and NO significant property damage occurred. That is a direct result of your personnel's actions!

I also want to thank the elected officials who supported our efforts. We were quickly able to get disaster declarations signed, emergency notifications completed and decisions made that aided in supporting our life saving efforts and resources. Additionally, they allowed us to do what we do best, make life safety our number one priority!

We have always known that Q'emlin Park and areas south of the Spokane River are one of our most significant target hazards for a wildfire in our jurisdiction. That said, while one of our biggest fears was realized, we also realized that the training we have done to prepare and that the relationships we have with all of you won the day! We hope that this is a one-time occurrence, if not it is comforting to know how well we all work together. Please also know that KCFR stands ready to help you, your agencies and your communities in any way possible!

In closing, I would ask that you please pass on our extreme gratefulness to all of your personnel that responded to and/or supported the Parkway Fire Incident.

With Deep Appreciation and Gratitude,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Chris Way', written in a cursive style.

Christopher E. Way
Fire Chief

Cc: Kootenai County Fire and Rescue, Board of Fire Commissioners
Kootenai County, Board of County Commissioners
City of Post Falls, Mayor and City Council
Post Falls Highway District, Board of Commissioners
Idaho State Board of Land Commissioners
Idaho State Police, Colonel Kendrick Wills