You may be asking yourself what it takes to be a wildland fire fighter. Well, I can help you on some of the aspects that it takes for that type of job.

Let’s talk about the different types of crews you can work on. The engine crew is typically based of five personnel but it can go up to 10 people in some circumstances. They spend most their days on their vehicle or a few feet from it. They do a lot of support roles for the other crews. Like sometime running hose legs to supply water to the hand cruise. The funnest time I had on the engines was when we fought the fire by spraying water directly on it

Another type of fire crew that a lot of people don’t know about is the fuels crew. Fuel crew is a stepping stone for those who want to fight fire but don’t how to start. The amount of people who can be on the fuel crew varies on the organization that run it but they can have 21 to 10 people on their crew. Their responsibility is to go and an overgrown forest and reduce the fuel load in the area. The reason they do that is if a fire does hit where they work, either it stops or slow down.

Hand crews are typically one of two crews that people think of when they think of wildland fire fighting. Hand crew are made up of 21 people. There are a lot of types of hand crews. There’s type 2, type 2 IA, type 1 or hot shots. The type 2 crew is the crew the has the lowest mount of qualification. The type 2 IA means that there is an initial attack. They have a little more qualification and the guys have more experience. A hotshot crew will be the more experience of the firefighter. Hotshot are required to have experience: 80% of the crew members on a hotshot crew have at least one year of experience. While the requirement for a Type 2 IA crew is only 60%.

Helitack crews provide land managers with a safe, highly skilled, and productive aerial firefighting resource. Crew members are specially trained in the tactical and logistical use of helicopters for fire suppression. These crews are a primary initial attack resource transported to wildfires by helicopter.

Smokejumpers are specially trained wildland firefighters who provide an initial attack response on remote wildland fires. They are inserted at the site of the fire by parachute. In addition to performing the initial attack on wildfires, they may also provide leadership for extended attacks on wildland fires.

Wildland is a very physical job that takes well disciplined person to maintain their physicality throughout the year. You may think that you will show up to your first day on the job and start your physical training, but that is the wrong idea. That’s is because wildland firefighting is a seasonal job and by the you start working in the spring the fire season is starting up. You rely way too much on your physical ability to save your life. You’re expected to carry a minimum of 45 pounds worth of essential equipment and I will talk more about the equipment later on. But that 45-pound backpack that you’re caring is on you 16 hours a day and you’re going up and down steep terrain.

You will meet a lot of people and some of them will become good friends maybe even best friends. But sometimes you will find somebody you don’t like. That’s when you’ll learn a life lesson how to work with people you don’t get along with. Because you’re going to be in close quarters with your crew and that depends on what type of crew, you’re on.