

Administration

1769 E. Moody Blvd Bldg 2
Bunnell, FL 32110



www.flaglercounty.org

Phone: (386)313-4001

Fax: (386)313-4101

Julie Murphy
Flagler County
Public Information Officer
(386) 313-4039
Email jmurphy@flaglercounty.org

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Flagler helicopter training prepares firefighters, paramedics

February 11, 2019 – FireFlight’s hangar at the Flagler Executive Airport has been busy this month as outside agencies have paid visits for two separate trainings: wildfire air operations, and helicopter air ambulance orientation.

Representatives from the Charlotte County Sheriff’s Office, Florida Forest Service, St. Johns County Sheriff’s Office, Seminole County Sheriff’s Office, and the Volusia County Sheriff’s Office – all but St. Johns County flew into the airport – on February 1 attended the Wildfire Air Operations training session that was organized by Chief Pilot and newly appointed Director of Aircraft Maintenance Steven “Todd” Whaley.



“We’ve been fighting (wild)fires with a helicopter for five years,” said Charlotte County Chief Pilot Shane Engelhauf. “Our aviation just happens to fall under the Sheriff’s Office. We are grateful for these training opportunities, because we support (firefighting) operations. We are a force multiplier for the crews working fire on the ground.”

Charles Ericksen, Jr.
District 1

Greg Hansen
District 2

David Sullivan
District 3

Joe Mullins
District 4

Donald O’Brien, Jr.
District 5

Whaley, in addition to his many other credentials, is a Florida certified Wild-Land Firefighter, Structural Firefighter 1, First Responder and a member of the Airborne Law Enforcement Association. He arranged for attendees to discuss the following: Florida Forest Service Wildfire Air Operations Plan; fire communications; “Bambi Bucket” (water bucket) operations; fire suppression tactics and techniques; and, a question-answer session about Automatic Dependent Surveillance-Broadcast flight following.

Activity at the hangar remained robust February 5-7 when Dana Morris – FireFlight Operations Chief – welcomed paramedics from Palm Coast and Flagler Beach, in addition to those from Flagler County Fire Rescue, for hands-on orientation of all local air ambulances, including Trauma One, located in St. Johns County, and the Volusia County Sheriff’s Office Air One.

Morris – who has been with Flagler County since 2002, and has well over 12,000 hours of flying time – said the training is important for all area paramedics as neighboring counties provide back-up when FireFlight is unavailable. The training took place to allow all shifts to attend an orientation session.

“The equipment and procedures differ somewhat,” Morris said. “We want to make sure that all of our paramedics can perform equally well regardless of which helicopter (air ambulance) arrives.”

###