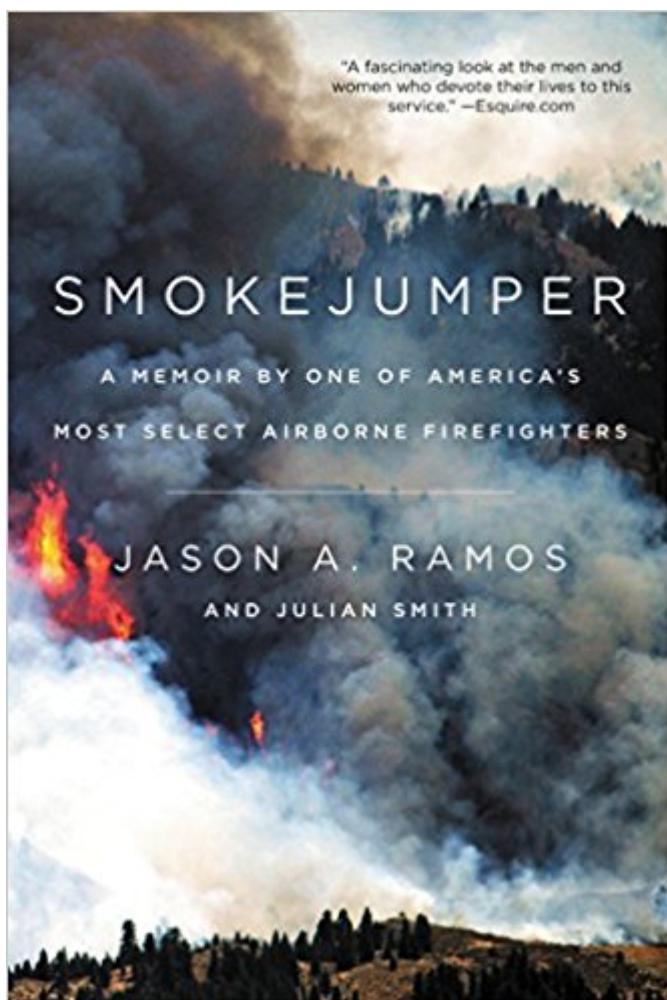


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# Smokejumper: A Memoir By One Of America's Most Select Airborne Firefighters



## Synopsis

A PACIFIC NORTHWEST BOOKSELLERS ASSOCIATION BESTSELLER "A fascinating look" (Esquire) at the thrilling world of smokejumpers, the airborne firefighters who parachute into the most remote and rugged areas of the United States, confronting the growing threat of nature's blazes. Forest and wildland fires are growing larger, more numerous, and deadlier every year — record drought conditions, decades of forestry mismanagement, and the increasing encroachment of residential housing into the wilderness have combined to create a powder keg that threatens millions of acres and thousands of lives every year. One select group of men and women are part of America's front-line defense: smokejumpers. The smokejumper program operates through both the U.S. Forest Service and the Bureau of Land Management. Though they are tremendously skilled and only highly experienced and able wildland firefighters are accepted into the training program, being a smokejumper remains an art that can only be learned on the job. Forest fires often behave in unpredictable ways: spreading almost instantaneously, shooting downhill behind a stiff tailwind, or even flowing like a liquid. In this extraordinarily rare memoir by an active-duty jumper, Jason Ramos takes readers into his exhilarating and dangerous world, explores smokejumping's remarkable history, and explains why their services are more essential than ever before.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

"A fascinating look at the men and women who devote their lives to this service." (Esquire.com) "You think your job's hard? Jason Ramos and his colleagues

parachute into the wilderness in order to save nature from going up in flames. He takes readers into the world of smokejumping, which has become more important as drought in America becomes more widespread. (MensJournal.com (a 7 Best Books of the Month selection)) "Jason Ramos' *Smokejumper* is a rousing personal adventure story, a nutshell history of the great wildland fires, and insider's brief for making smokejumpers more relevant on today's fire line. (John N. Maclean, author of *Fire on the Mountain*) "Jason Ramos weaves personal experiences, smokejumper history, fire science, and fire operations into a fascinating book. It is a must read for all firefighters as well as any American who lives or recreates in or near wildfire prone areas. (Larry Lufkin, son of Francis Lufkin, Smokejumper NCSB '40, '46, '48-'50, MSO '42-44) "Nothing can ever measure up to the sound of engines roaring as you step out into the cold air, into harm's way--to the smell of smoke and the endless beauty of the western mountains of America. Jason Ramos brings all that alive in this book. (Bill Furman, CEO, Greenbrier Companies, Inc., Smokejumper NCSB '62-'67) A Pacific Northwest Booksellers Association bestseller (-) "[A] touching and fast-paced memoir... written with precision and perspective, sometimes with a touch of poetry. ... A fun and valuable read for anyone seeking to learn more about those who are willing to risk their lives to battle such deadly infernos. (Washington Post) "Compelling. ... A fast-paced, eye-opening read. (Minneapolis Star Tribune) "Interwoven with his exciting adventures on fires throughout the west, Jason educates the reader about the art of firefighting, the smokejumper culture, and the human tragedies associated with his 26-year firefighting career. (Bill Moody, NCSB Jumper & Base Manager (retired) 1957-89, currently seasonal Air Tactical Group Supervisor and Aerial Fire Suppression Consultant) "Jason Ramos tells of nature at its most savage, of 2,000-degree heat and hurricane-force drafts, of heroic, sometimes lethal efforts to save the lives of people less prepared. Here you'll meet the people who fly between Heaven and Hell. And jump. (Wayne van Zwoll, PhD, former Special Projects Editor, *Intermedia Outdoors*) "Fast-paced. ... Ramos is an expert guide through a fearful world. ... His passion is unmistakable. (USA Today) "Ramos chronicles the history of the elite group of airborne firefighters who attack blazes in some of the West's most remote and rugged country. ... Ramos' narrative will surely spark hearty debate. (High Country News)

A Pacific Northwest Booksellers Association BestsellerIn a firestorm, nothing is safe: sand turns to glass, metal runs like water, wood and human beings vanish into ash. Enter a world of breathtaking

danger and beauty: In this remarkable memoir, veteran smokejumper Jason Ramos offers a rare inside look at the lives of airborne firefighters, the select few who parachute into the most rugged and remote wild areas to battle nature's blazes. Featuring a foreword by author John Maclean (Fire on the Mountain), Ramos's unforgettable firsthand account takes readers into his exhilarating and daring world.

Having been a firefighter on the East Coast for almost 30 years, I have been exposed to almost every type of firefighting that exists with the exception of 2. I have never been exposed to the style of wildland firefighting that occurs here in the West and I have never been exposed to, or even met, a smokejumper. Smokejumper are an elite, and to an average firefighter, crazy group of people who jump from perfectly good airplanes to land in some of the most rugged and inhospitable terrain that exists in the West for the express purpose of getting control of wildland fires in their early stages. They also fight regular wildland fires when there isn't any jumping to do. It is a program that has been around for dozens of years and has a surprisingly good safety record. The author takes the reader into the life of a smokejumper, and lets them experience, safely, what conditions are like on the fire line. He also delves into policy issues about how devastating wildfires develop and the need to let certain fire burn, rather than to put them out. An excellent read for both the novice and expert alike. I recommend it highly!

I had a hard time putting the book down. It is that good! The combination of personal stories and history of smokejumping, fires, etc. made it not only very interesting, but also very educational. I will never look at a fire the same way. Thank you for sharing this information with the rest of the world (who may or may not know anything about smokejumpers) and thank you to all of the smokejumpers for your service to this country.

This book is a fantastic read. It's fast-paced and full of adventure, but it also brings alive the history of smokejumping and tells of the pioneers who began the program in 1939. It weaves Jason's story together and current events together with the past, and gives you understanding and insight into wildland firefighting that you'll not find anywhere else. Plus, it's a darn good read for anyone who is interested in the West, climate change, wildfires and of course, smokejumping. Loved it!!!!

Definitely recommend! Only one 'drawback' was the language - realistic but not what I want my kids to read. Thought of a fix, though. You can easily white-out those words. Worth it for a good history

of smokejumping.

this is a memoir by Jason Ramos one of Americas elite smokejumpers presently stationed in Winthrop Washington. You will learn plenty about the smokejumpers, their origin, training , mindset and firefighting methods. Ramos has been fighting fires both volunteer and professional since he was 17 years old. There are examinations of deadly wildfires of the past with lessons learned and changes that came about as a result along with the authors critiques and recommendations. If you are interested in this unique profession along with the science of wild land fires, you will enjoy. Recommended .

This book is a fantastic read, a compelling story that I could not put it down! It is an interesting and exciting, well-written book that educated me about wildfires and the remarkable people (like Jason) who fight them! I enjoyed reading about the history of firefighting, and I became totally engrossed in the many exciting, and sometimes tragic stories that Jason tells about his rigorous training and years of work as a Smokejumper. My husband and I have had the pleasure of meeting Jason in recent years, and I was totally impressed with his book! We have been on one of his tours of the Smokejumper Base in Winthrop and I highly recommend that anyone who is in the area stops by for a tour. The Pacific Northwest is currently having the worst fire season in history. Having read this book makes me so much more appreciative of what firefighters are doing across my home state right now! Thanks, Jason, for all of your years of service and for writing this book!

I enjoyed this book and I learned a lot from it. The book tells of the process of becoming a smoke jumper, how they train and what they do. There's a lot of the daily life of a smoke jumper and wildfire fighter. This is not a history of famous wild fires. Mr. Ramos mentions several different ones but only in the sense of what can be learned from them and how injuries and death might be avoided. I think even the civilian like myself might benefit from the book in gaining a better understanding how wildfires can develop and thus avoid bad situations - when and how to get out of an area for example. I thought it was well written and an entertaining book.

This is a true to the bone, thrilling and excellent stories in which one of my friends remembers allot of the things that occurred, while HE was in the Forest Service in many of these states. An excellent and exciting book from Jason A. Ramos. Awesome read

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