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Wyo. Air Guard heading to fight Texas fires

CHEYENNE—The Wyoming Air National Guard's 153rd Airlift Wing left, today, to continue fighting wildfires throughout the United States – specifically in Texas.

The two C-130s and 27 guardsmen flew out to replace the 145 Airlift Wing, from the North Carolina Air National Guard

This is the third aerial firefighting deployment for the 153rd Airlift Wing this year. The first was in April, also to fight wildfires in Texas. The unit returned from Idaho, where they assisted with fires in Oregon and Idaho, earlier this week.

“The Wyoming Air National Guard is proud to respond to the request for assistance from our interagency partners at the U.S. Forest Service,” said Maj. Brian Diehl, the wing's MAFFS coordinator. “The MAFFS (Modular Airborne Fire Fighting System) mission is one of the most rewarding missions we do in the versatile C-130.”

The Wyoming Air National Guard is one of four military units equipped with the MAFFS II, capable of dispersing 3,000 gallons of fire retardant per load. Select aircrews from the 153rd Airlift Wing are certified annually, by the U.S. Forest Service, to fly the aerial firefighting mission.

The Wyoming Air National Guard began aerial firefighting in 1975, with the original Modular Airborne Firefighting System. The unit has fought fires throughout the U.S. and in Indonesia.

