Plumas and Lassen National Forests

Fire Update - August 16, 2012 8:00 PM

Chips Fire Information

Use this QR code to access the latest updates on Inciweb

Chips Fire Information Phone Numbers

(530)283-3593 and (530)283-3288
Email: chipsfireinfo@gmail.com
InciWeb: http://www.inciweb.org/incident/3052/
New Twitter Account! https://twitter.com/chipsfireinfo/
Flickr: http://www.flickr.com/photos/84437500@N05/

Fire Facts:

Date started: **July 29, 2012**
Location: **2 miles Northwest of Belden, CA**
Size: **42,964 acres**
Percent Contained: **20%**
Estimated Containment Date: **August 31, 2012**
Cause: **Under Investigation**
Cost to Date: **$17,500,000**
Structures Threatened: **900 Residence; 4 Commercial; 36 Outbuildings**

Number of Personnel: **1,123**
Crews: **11**
Engines: **107**
Dozers: **29**
Water Tenders: **31**
Helicopters: **5 Type 1**, **3 Type 2, and 2 Type 3**
Air Tankers: **Available**
Injuries to Date: **9**

Today's Update:

Firefighters continued to hold the fire south of the Humbug Road in the Grizzly Campground area. Crews also made significant progress burning from Yellow Creek Campground to Butt Valley Reservoir.

This afternoon the spot fire below Butt Valley Reservoir Dam spread northeast into the Clear Creek Drainage. Firefighters observed very active fire behavior. Helicopters dropped water and fire retardant gel to slow the rate of spread.

At Red Hill, crews continued to patrol for and suppress spot fires.

Firefighters continued to patrol and hold the fire west of the Caribou Road. Crews will also continue to attack persistent spot fires near the telecommunications towers on Red Hill.

The 940 structures that are considered threatened are in the following communities: Lake Almanor West, Almanor, Prattville, the Big Meadows subdivision, Canyondam, Belden, Rush Creek, and Seneca, and structures along Caribou Road. Residents in these areas will continue to see CalFire and Office of Emergency Services engines from various city fire departments moving through neighborhoods as they plan structure protection tactics. Bulldozers and other heavy equipment will continue building and improving contingency lines running southeast from Seneca Road.

PG&E representatives are working closely with the fire management team, and are prepared to de-energize transmission lines as needed for firefighting efforts, including the use of aircraft.

Fire Behavior and Smoke:

Clear weather resulted in a longer burning period and active fire behavior today. Slightly drier conditions are expected tonight with poor humidity recovery.

Public Safety:
Motorists are encouraged to use caution on roads within the vicinity of the fire, particularly on Highway 70 and Highway 89 due to increased fire traffic. Travelers should check highway conditions regularly at 800-427-ROAD or www.dot.ca.gov.

Smoke will continue to pose health concerns for the public. Residents are encouraged to visit the "Protect Yourself from Smoke" website for smoke protection information at http://www.cdc.gov/Features/Wildfires/. Local air quality conditions and forecasts are available at http://airnow.gov/index.cfm?action=airnow.main.

For tips on how to prepare for a potential evacuation and what to do if you are evacuated, residents in and near evacuation areas are encouraged to visit the **"Ready, Set, Go"** website at http://www.inciweb.org/incident/article/3052/15480/.

Power Outages:
To report and get updates on power outages please call PG&E's 24-hour emergency and customer service line: 1-800-743-5002.

Evacuations and Closures:
Mandatory Evacuations – The community of Seneca remains under a mandatory evacuation. The Caribou Road from the junction of Highway 70 to Butt Lake Dam as well the Butt Lake Dam, Ohio Valley Road, Butt Lake Road, Humbug/Humboldt and all additional secondary roads West of Highway 89 between Canyondam and the Humbug/Humboldt Road are under a "Hard Closure". Additional evacuations may be necessary depending on fire activity.

To register a cell phone with the Plumas County Emergency Notification System visit
http://countyofplumas.com/index.aspx?nid=2163.

Sheriff's Voluntary Evacuations are now in place for Rush Creek, Canyondam, and Big Meadows. The Sheriff's Advisement for other communities along Highway 89 including Prattville, Almanor, and West Almanor and East Shore Residence (Hwy 147) remains in effect. Residents between Tobin and Twain on Highway 70 are under a Sheriff's Advisement to develop a family evacuation plan. This area includes Belden, Maggie's Trailer Park, and Little Haven. Planning to provide shelter arrangements for local residents will be based on the locations and extent of any new mandatory evacuations issued by the Sheriff's Office.

Butt Valley Reservoir recreation facilities administered by PG&E (Ponderosa Flat Campground, Cool Springs Campground, Ray Adams Day Use Area and Boat Launch, as well as Yellow Creek Campground) are closed due to the fire. Gansner Bar, North Fork, and Queen Lily USFS campgrounds remain closed. The Little Grizzly dispersed camping area and High Lakes OHV area, are also closed.

Communities west of the fire area including Paradise, Jarbo Gap, and Concow are not threatened at this time.

In the interest of firefighter and public safety, the Plumas and Lassen National Forests have expanded the original closure areas due to the fire's growth. The closures will remain in place until the area is safe for the public to enter. Please see the Forest Orders and closure maps on InciWeb (address above). Pacific Crest Trail hikers may bypass the affected area by hiking Highway 70/89 or catching a bus with Plumas Transit to Chester, CA (weekdays only).

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