



Chips Fire Update

August 26 -- 8:00 A.M.



Location: Plumas and Lassen National Forests

Date started: July 29, 2012

Cause: Under investigation

Size: 66,750 acres

Containment: 61%

Personnel: 1,419 (Crews: 19 Type 1, 8 Type 2; Helicopters: 4 Type 1, 3 Type 2, 2 Type 3; Engines: 124; Dozers: 16; Water Tenders: 35)

Management: California Interagency Incident Management Team 4

Fire Status: The addition of numerous crews arriving at the incident yesterday allowed night crews to contain and mop up 100 feet into the interior of the spot fire in the Yellow Creek area, south-west of Butt Valley Reservoir. This action accomplished securing any additional northern progression of the fire. Also, significant progress was made with the burnout operation along the eastern perimeter of the fire, working south to Forest Road 20N22. This operation, which has been progressing for several days, has been critical in anticipation of the high winds forecasted for today, tomorrow, and Tuesday. This large burnout operation, approximately 10,000 acres and extending from the Red Hill area north to the top of Kirkham Ravine, is creating a low intensity burn along contingency lines. When the winds develop today, the burnout area will provide for lighter fuels for the main fire to run through, which will result in reduced fire behavior and increased security of containment lines along the north-east perimeter.

As noted, winds are expected to increase today. In fact, a Red Flag Warning has been issued over the fire area beginning at noon today, and lasting through 10:00 p.m. This Warning is due to strong and gusty winds along with a drier air mass. Winds are expected to be from the south-west 15- 20 miles per hour, with 35 mile per hour gusts. Fire managers have been planning for this wind event, and firefighters are poised to detect and attack any spot fires which ignite outside the fire perimeter, as well as hold the line where containment lines have been completed. Part of the planning for this event included ordering and receiving additional firefighting resources, including continuing to utilize numerous air resources such as the DC-10. As Incident Commander Rocky Opliger stated this morning while briefing the firefighters, "Folks are spiked out, people are assigned to all areas of the fire. This is the day. We are a Type 1 Team, and if it were easy we wouldn't be here."

Supporting crews on the ground today will be four Type 1 helicopters, three Type 2 helicopters, and two Type 3 helicopters, in addition to several air tankers. These aerial resources are an important component of the fire fight, dropping water and retardant along the fire's edge, allowing firefighters on the ground to work closer to the fire's edge constructing, improving and holding fire lines.

Smoke: Smoke will continue to be present in the fire area and surrounding communities. With several large fires in the area contributing to lower air quality, residents can experience eye irritation,

respiratory issues and aggravated heart and lung health problems. These can impact children and older adults more severely. Residents are encouraged to get more information on air quality in their area by visiting: http://airnow.gov/index.cfm?action=airnow.local_state&stateid=5&tab=0

Evacuations and Closures: No changes have occurred to evacuations at this time. The Plumas County Sheriff's Department continues to enforce Mandatory Evacuations for the communities of Canyon Dam and the Big Meadows area. A Voluntary Evacuation is in place for Rush Creek, and an Advisory is in effect for Prattville residents for the potential threat of the fire to the area.

The Plumas and Lassen National Forests continue to maintain area Closures within and surrounding the Chips fire area. This includes the following area of the Pacific Crest Trail: The PCT is officially closed from Three Lakes (in the Bucks Lake Wilderness) on the Plumas National Forest northbound to the Cold Spring trailhead at the Humbug Road (Plumas County Road 307) on the Lassen National Forest. Additionally, using the Caribou Road (Forest Route 27N26) is prohibited, as the area is also officially closed.

Hikers and equestrians are advised to avoid travel on the portion of the PCT from Bucks Summit, north to Hwy 36. In order to re-route themselves most expeditiously, at Bucks Summit, northbound trail users may travel on Plumas County Road 414 east to Quincy, pick up Highway 70/89 to Chester and then Highway 36 west to resume the trail. Southbound travelers may reverse the process.

Hikers may also use Plumas County Transit between Quincy and Chester, available weekdays only. The transit schedule can be found at http://www.plumastransit.com/qcy_to_chester_23.html

For complete closure information, including a map of the Plumas National Forest Closure, please go to: <http://www.fs.usda.gov/alerts/plumas/alerts-notice?aid=13861>

For complete closure information, including a map of the Lassen National Forest Closure, please go to: <http://www.fs.usda.gov/alerts/lassen/alerts-notice>

Community Meetings: A community meeting will be held tonight at 6:30 p.m. at the Greenville Town Hall, 127 Bidwell Street, Greenville, CA 95947.

Additional Fire Information: <http://www.inciweb.org/incident/3052/> or call (530) 283-3593 and (530) 283-3288 between the hours of 7:30 a.m. and 8 p.m.

