



Chips Fire Update

August 28 -- 8:00 P.M.



Location: Plumas and Lassen National Forests

Date started: July 29, 2012

Cause: Under investigation

Size: 74,125 acres

Containment: 87%

Personnel: 1,527 (Crews: 10 Type 1, 17 Type 2; Helicopters: 4 Type 1, 3 Type 2, 2 Type 3; Engines: 122; Dozers: 14; Water Tenders: 42)

Management: California Interagency Incident Management Team 4

Fire Status: Containment lines continued to hold despite gusty afternoon winds. A large of smoke was visible in the area surrounding the Chips fire, however this was due to burning pockets of previously unburned fuels well inside the fire's interior. This activity was expected today, and did not pose a threat to the fire lines. A handful of spot fires jumped the lines but all were contained at less than one acre. A Red Flag warning remains in effect until 5:00 a.m. tomorrow.

Winds associated with the Red Flag warning will be sustained at 10-15 miles per hour with gusts up to 30 miles per hour on ridge tops. Firefighters will continue to patrol and grid containment lines throughout the evening to check for spot fires. This fire has spread by spotting, and with unseasonably high temperatures, drought and wind continuing to keep the probability of ignition high, firefighters will remain vigilant in securing control lines.

Mop-up continued around the fire line today increasing control lines up to 300 feet in spots within the fire perimeter. Firefighters have mopped up at least 100 feet into the fire area along containment lines and continue working the perimeter to deepen control.

The western flank of the fire continues to creep slowly west. Crews of hot shots are constructing containment line in rugged country. This is accomplished not only by digging and clearing but moving large rocks to stop further progression. Crews will be flown in by helicopter to Chips Lake and construct control lines while mopping-up into the interior. Firefighters will also be able to utilize the Chips Lake water sources to cool localized hot spots. Aerial resources have also assisted with water drops in particularly difficult areas.

A suppression repair group continues work to rehabilitate bulldozer lines and ground that was disturbed during fire suppression operations. This process will include a team of specialists called a Burned Area Emergency Response (BAER) team addressing soil stabilization issues to reduce post-fire erosion. The US Forest Service will consider mid-term and long-term risks that burned trees pose to public safety. This will be evaluated in conjunction with post-fire salvage options to help supply local jobs to local communities as well as the development of estimates of lands requiring reforestation.

Evacuations and Closures: At 10:00 a.m. tomorrow, August 29, the Plumas County Sheriff's Advisement for Prattville will be lifted. The Mandatory Evacuation Order for Rocky Point Campground, Big Meadows, Almanor Boat Ramp, Almanor Day Use Area, Camp Connery and Canyon Dam will be lifted to Advisory Notification. The Voluntary Evacuation Notification for Rush Creek will be lifted. Seneca remains under Mandatory Evacuation.

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/gcy_to_chester_23.html

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.

