



News Release

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Georges Fire Update

The Georges Fire (lightning-caused) has grown to an estimated 2,500 acres and is 10% contained. Command of the fire has transitioned to SoCal Team 3, a Type 2 incident management team.

Last night, fire behavior decreased when the winds died down. Crews used this opportunity to strengthen initial firelines to improve containment.

Today, fire crews continue to focus their suppression efforts on the southern flank of the fire because of concerns for the Whitney Portal area. Steep terrain and thick fuels are a challenge for crews in this area. Crews will continue to improve fireline along the east and north flanks. The west flank is burning into steep, inaccessible terrain. In this area, the fire will eventually "rock out" as the fire reaches the granite cliffs and the absence of fuel. The fire is burning in sage brush and transitioning to a pinyon-juniper forest at higher elevation. The monsoonal weather pattern will continue to bring lightning storms and gusty winds to the fire area.

The Whitney Portal area has been evacuated. This includes campgrounds, residents, and the Whitney Portal Store. The Hogback and Whitney Portal Roads are closed. Additional road closures include the Foothill Road and Moffat Ranch Road as well as any other roads that enter the fire area. Please avoid the fire area for your safety and for our firefighters' safety.

Hikers with permits for the Mt. Whitney Trailhead and the Shepherd Pass Trailhead cannot begin their hikes today from these trailheads. Hikers who picked up their permit to hike Mt. Whitney in advance may not hike the trail. The National Recreation Trail (from Lone Pine Campground) is also closed and may not be used as an alternative to get to Whitney Portal. The Inyo National Forest is also working with campers who hold reservations at Whitney Portal. The forest will re-evaluate access to these areas on daily basis based upon fire behavior and fire containment. The primary concerns are for the safety along the road and at Whitney Portal, not to the trail networks themselves.

Hikers who exit at Whitney Portal that do not have a vehicle may call a shuttle service (see attached) to arrange to be picked up. Shuttle services will only be assisting exiting hikers at this time as conditions permit.

There are 611 personnel assigned to the incident, including 20 crews, 27 engines, four dozers, five helicopters, three air tankers, and three water tenders assigned to the incident.

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