



# Chips Fire Update

## August 22 -- 8:00 P.M.



**Location:** Plumas and Lassen National Forests

**Date started:** July 29, 2012

**Cause:** Under investigation

**Size:** 63,147 acres

**Containment:** 40%

**Personnel:** 1,146 (Crews: 12 Type 1, 5 Type 2; Helicopters: 5 Type 1, 2 Type 2, 2 Type 3; Engines: 109; Dozers: 17; Water Tenders: 27)

**Management:** California Interagency Incident Management Team 4

**Fire Status:** Today, winds were lighter and temperatures cooler, allowing fire fighters to make excellent progress moving towards containment goals. Smoke lingered in the area most of the day, however, limiting use of aircraft support over much of the fire area. Throughout the day, crews scouted and contained several spot fires caused by burning material transported ahead of the main fire during yesterday's wind event. All of the detected spot fires have been contained, however patrols will continue in the area and throughout the communities of Canyon Dam, Prattville and the Big Meadows areas to ensure no spot fires remain undetected. Today, hand crews also engaged in mop-up of previously burned areas as well as back-haul of equipment left on the fire line. Mop-up is a critical action in which crews ensure all hot spots up to 300 feet inside the fire's perimeter are extinguished. Preparation of indirect fire lines was completed in anticipation of night time burnout operations in both the Red Mountain area and the area continuing south away from Canyon Dam and to the west of Highway 89. With these areas prepped, night crews will conduct burning operations throughout the night tonight. As has been successfully implemented in previous nights, burning during the evening hours when temperatures are cooler and humidities are higher allows fire managers to reduce fuels between the fire line and the main fire. This takes away fuels from the main fire, providing for less active fire behavior and threat to the fire line when temperatures and winds increase during the day.

Late in the day today, two areas of the fire became active. However this increased activity did not pose a threat to the fire line. The two areas that became more active were the Red Mountain area, scheduled for burning operations tonight, and the Rattlesnake Peak area, well within the interior of the fire east of Butt Valley Reservoir.

Along the west flank of the fire, hotshot crews continue to slowly and methodically build fire line directly along the fire's edge, working from north to south towards the Chips Creek drainage. Terrain in this area is extremely rugged, making progress slow but steady. The Wildland Fire Module, which is a specialized crew of ten people trained to work self-sufficiently in the back country for extended periods, which arrived on the south-west area of the fire yesterday identified opportunities for containing the fire in this area by constructing hand line and using natural barriers. Due to heavy smoke throughout the fire area, the infra-red mapping scheduled for today in the south-west flank of

the fire was not conducted. It is anticipated that this will be accomplished tomorrow. The aerial infrared mapping will pin-point hot spots for the crew to focus on extinguishing.

Along the northern flank of the fire, crews continue to mop up into the fire's interior, remove equipment left behind from fire-fighting activities, and begin repair of areas damaged by fire suppression activities. This work will continue throughout the fire area as containment is gained.

Several injuries occurred today, including three knee injuries and one ankle injuries. These injuries were directly related to the steep, treacherous, unstable terrain fire fighters are working in while fighting the Chips fire.

**Evacuations and Closures:** No changes have occurred to evacuations and road closures. The Plumas County Sheriff's Department continues to enforce Mandatory Evacuations for the communities of Prattville, Canyon Dam and the Big Meadows area. A Voluntary Evacuation is in place for Almanor, and an Advisory is in effect to all West Almanor and East Shore residents (Hwy. 147) advising of the potential threat of the fire to the areas. An evacuation Center continues to be available at the Chester Memorial Hall on Gay Street.

Highway 89 from Butt Lake Road to 4.3 miles north of Greenville is closed to all traffic due to heavy smoke and a large amount of emergency equipment on the roadway. For more information, please go to: <http://www.countyofplumas.com/CivicAlerts.aspx?AID=536>

**Community Meetings:** A community meeting will be held tomorrow evening at 6:00 p.m. at the Hamilton Branch Fire Station, 3791 Big Springs Road, Westwood, CA 96137.

**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 10:00 p.m.

