



Chips Fire Update

August 23 -- 8:00 A.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: With gusty southwest winds predicted for this afternoon, Operations Section Chief, Rob Laeng instructed firefighters at the morning briefing, "Today's mission is clear—hold, hold, hold."

Gusts from 15-25 miles per hour are expected on the fire this afternoon which will increase fire activity on the interior of the burn area. Throughout the day, firefighters will be on the perimeter of the fire patrolling for spots and continuing mop-up operations. Mop-up is a critical component of securing fire lines by ensuring that hot spots inside the perimeter are extinguished.

Firefighters will be patrolling the Prattville, Big Meadows and Canyon Dam areas throughout the day as well as continuing to mop-up operations. Crews also continue to work in a contained slop-over point around the Rocky Point area. In advance of firefighters falling trees in the area, last night PG&E de-energized the power line that serves Lake Almanor West, Almanor, Prattville, Big Meadows, and Canyon Dam. This action will allow firefighters to work around power lines safely and efficiently. Power will be re-energized to the lines when work is completed in the area.

Night crews worked on burnout operations in the Red Hill and Rattlesnake Peak areas and along the fire line. These burnouts were not completed due to unfavorable weather conditions necessary to carry fire. However, firefighters will remain on these lines, patrolling throughout the day.

The south-western and western flanks of the fire are staffed by Interagency Hotshot Crews and Wildland Fire Modules working to construct hand line in extremely rugged and steep country. Wildland Fire Modules are specialized crews of ten people trained to work self-sufficiently in the back country for extended periods will work in the Chips Creek drainage until line construction is complete. Infra-red mapping planned for today will aid in the identification of hot spots on the ground so they can be extinguished by crews or aircraft when necessary.

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.

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 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 remains closed to all traffic due to heavy smoke and a large amount of emergency equipment on the roadway. Please stay tuned as conditions are subject to change. For more information, please go to:

<http://www.countyofplumas.com/CivicAlerts.aspx?AID=536>

Community Meetings: A community meeting will be held tonight 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.

