



Chips Fire Update

August 25 -- 8:00 P.M.



Location: Plumas and Lassen National Forests

Date started: July 29, 2012

Cause: Under investigation

Size: 66,750 acres

Containment: 61%

Personnel: 1,496 (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: Crews prepared contingency lines for a burnout operation on the eastern flank of the fire from Muggins Creek to Caribou today. If conditions remain favorable and burning is completed, this will create a low intensity burn along contingency lines from the Rattlesnake Peak area to Caribou. Burnout operations continue to be supported by retardant drops on the outside of containment lines.

Fires ignited last night continued to back into the active fire area on the interior of the burn today. Protection around structures in the community of Seneca remains a high priority as crews applied structure fire protection gel to homes and outbuildings, and placed sprinklers on historical buildings to preserve their integrity.

Mop-up operations continue along the perimeters and into the interior of the burn area. Mop-up involves "cold trailing" which is a critical piece of containing the fire's edge. It involves firefighters walking or crawling along fire lines and using the back of their hands to feel the ground for heat. It is a tedious process of feeling stumps, roots and rocks for heat, and then turning over dirt onto hot spots and, where possible, getting water into the area to cool it off. These efforts begin at the fire's edge with firefighters working an arm's length from each other and moving in step along fire lines. It is an organized and disciplined process called "gridding" and it's being done along the fire perimeter in and outside of containment lines every day and night. Because of the fire behavior of this fire, which has spread by spotting, gridding is an important part of controlling and containing fire lines and securing buffers around the fire's edge. The fire area continues to throw spots up to a mile, with many landing outside of containment lines. Firefighters patrolling the area have caught and contained these fires and continue to be aided by the Cobra helicopter flying with an Infra-red device and reporting heat registers in and around the fire area.

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.

Community Meetings: A community meeting will be held tomorrow, August 26 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.

