



## Forest Service News Release



### Public Information

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## Fire Update Smith River Complex A.M. 8/21

**Gasquet, Calif., August 21<sup>st</sup>, 2023** —Due to the complexity and expansive geographic area of the Smith River Complex, Pacific Northwest Incident Management Team 13 (NWIMT13) has joined with California Interagency Incident Management Team 15 (CAIIMT-15) to manage the emerging incident. The addition of NWIMT-13 will be beneficial in providing management of resources assigned to the northern reaches of the Complex to aid in fire suppression activities and improved safety. CAIIMT-15 will continue suppression efforts on fires south of the California/Oregon border. Both teams will be working closely together as they share a mutual interest to provide for the safety and welfare of the affected public and firefighting personnel.

The Smith River Complex is approximately 30,392 acres with zero percent containment. A Red Flag Warning was issued yesterday for strong, dry, northeasterly winds which also prompted a new evacuation of the Gasquet community. Remote weather stations confirmed strong winds occurred on the upper elevations overnight, but fortunately never surfaced along the Smith River corridor, causing the fire to remain at the upper elevation and avoiding an imminent threat to the communities. Beginning Tuesday, weather is predicted to moderate with cooler temperatures. This cooling trend along with smoky conditions may reduce fire behavior across the complex. An infrared flight occurred yesterday evening and it confirmed that the Holiday and Kelly fires have merged. Going forward, the combined fire will be referred to as the Kelly Fire. Highway 199 remains closed. Pacific Power transmission lines continue to be threatened by the fires, as well.

Additional resources will continue to arrive to the incident, including six strike teams of both structure and wildland engines. These engines will be incorporated into the suppression efforts to protect communities and critical infrastructure. Additional engines and hand crews are expected to arrive over the next several days. Law enforcement personnel from multiple jurisdictions are also assisting with incident safety and security. There are currently over 850 total personnel on scene with many more expected to arrive over the next several days.

### Evacuations

All evacuation orders are issued by the Del Norte County Sheriff's Office. If you are in the Del Norte County, area please sign up for their [Community Alert System](#) to receive emergency notifications. Evacuation levels as of 8:00 am today August 21st are as follows:

**Level 3 “Go Now”:** Patrick Creek, Little Jones Creek, Copper Creek Drainage, Coon Creek/ 16n19 17n07, Washington Flat, Pioneer Road, Panther Flat Campground Area, all communities between Slant Bridge Road north to the Oregon Border along Highway 199, French Hill Road.

**Level 2 “Be Set”:** High Divide, Rowdy Creek, Big Flat/Rock Creek

**Level 1 “Be Ready”:** Low Divide, Hiouchi from Slant Bridge to the east end of North Bank Road

## **Closures**

Howland Hill Road (Residents Only)

County road 316, Shelly Creek,

County Road 315 Holiday Mine

County Road 311 Old Gasquet Toll Road

County Road 305 Weimer Road

Forest Service Roads 16N19 and 17N07

U.S. Highway 199 is fully closed in Del Norte County from Slant Bridge Road to Oregon Mountain Road (PM 16 to 31) due to the fires. A hard closure is in place on U.S. 199 at the Agriculture Station near the Oregon border. For the latest road conditions please visit [quickmap.dot.ca.gov](https://quickmap.dot.ca.gov)

Effective Sunday, August 20, 2023, the Six Rivers National Forest has issued a forest-wide closure order. <https://www.fs.usda.gov/detail/srnf/notices/?cid=FSEPRD1096395>

The American Red Cross has opened a shelter at the Del Norte County Fairgrounds (421 US-101 N, Crescent City, CA 95531) for those who are displaced by evacuations. Red Cross disaster workers are partnering with local officials to help ensure evacuees receive basic necessities, including food, water and shelter.

***Please refer to the following social media for additional information:***

Smith River Complex Inciweb: [inciweb.nwcg.gov/incident-information/casrf-smith-river-complex](https://inciweb.nwcg.gov/incident-information/casrf-smith-river-complex)

Facebook: Six River National Forest: <https://www.facebook.com/SixRiversNF>

Del Norte Office of Emergency Services: <https://www.facebook.com/DelNorteOfficeOfEmergencyServices>

Del Norte County Sheriff's Office: <https://www.facebook.com/DelNorteCountySheriffDepartment>

Josephine County Emergency Management: <https://www.facebook.com/josephinecountyEM>

Rogue River-Siskiyou National Forest: <https://www.facebook.com/R6RRSNF/>