

# Fire Update

## 2023 SRF Lightning Complex

Friday, September 22, 2023 – 9:00 a.m.



### Eastern Area Gold Team

Brian Jenkins, Incident Commander

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**Information Staffing Hours:** 8 am to 8 pm

This update covers 7 of the 14 fires being managed as part of the SRF Lightning Complex. The Copper Fire (2184 acres) has been absorbed by the Blue Creek #2 Fire. The remaining 6 fires (Big Foot, Blue Creek, Creek, Flat, Iron, and Merrill) totaling 34 acres, are contained and in patrol status. They are checked daily, and their size and containment are unlikely to change.

**Current Situation:** The 14 fires in this incident total 36,103 acres and overall containment is 7%. The seven uncontained fires described below total 33,876 acres. In total, 1,079 personnel are assigned to the incident. Yesterday the Peach Fire moved into the Butler Flats area, slowly backing with low flame heights. The fire also moved slowly near the north side of Butler Creek. The Structure Protection Group activated the pumps and hose systems as well as sprinklers where needed to protect structures. Crews will continue to take every action available to suppress and contain the fire, protect the communities, and ensure public safety. The fire was active above the Highway 96 corridor and drivers are urged to drive slow on the highway because rocks and debris may fall.

Research shows that fire is critical for healthy forests and maintains important forest functions like water quality, clean air, and wildlife habitat. In addition, Indigenous traditional ecological knowledge supports the practice of cultural burning that was historically conducted by local Tribal Nations. The fire, weather, and fuel conditions on the 2023 SRF Lightning Complex continue to be favorable for using strategic firing operations to accomplish fire suppression, reduce the risk of future extreme wildfires, and uphold our responsibilities to Tribal Nations.

**Peach Fire** (9,358 acres, 7% contained) – Crews are actively engaged on the southeast flank and continue to monitor fire activity as it moves slowly downslope. **An Evacuation Warning is in place for those residents in the Butler Creek area (SIS-1704) which means persons in the area need to be prepared to evacuate if conditions warrant.** The Structure Protection Group is using pumps to protect structures, monitoring the fire's progress. The fire is currently above the Salmon River Road and crews are coordinating with CalTrans on plans to remove any debris that might fall into the road as the fire slowly backs down the slope. In addition, CalTrans was contacted to coordinate work to promptly remove debris from Highway 96 and provide signage for safe public travel on the north flank where the fire has sent some rocks rolling downhill towards the road. Helicopters took advantage of the clearer air yesterday, delivering buckets of water to reduce fire spread and minimize the debris rolling downslope. Crews will remain on the fire during both day and night shifts. On the southeast corner Firefighters continued to assess potential ridges and locations for control lines should the fire spread that direction. Similarly, the Structure Group continues to assess and conduct point protection for structures.

**Bluff #1** (4,529 acres, 19% contained) **and Mosquito** (6,650 acres, 19% contained) **Fires** – Mastication work continued, moving south along the Bluff Creek Road. Heavy equipment crews are coordinating closely with Resource Advisors with Six Rivers National Forest and the Tribe to ensure the work is done in the right place at the right time, and in alignment with the delegation of authority. North of the Bluff #1 Fire, managers will assess if additional firing operations are needed along the Bluff Creek Road to meet established objectives. Crews continued to add depth to containment line north of the Mosquito fire, patrolling for heat and extinguishing more active areas close to the line. The south side of the Mosquito Fire is holding steady, and crews continue to monitor the conditions. Fire crews are working with mastication equipment along the Slate Creek Road to connect the fuel break to the work on Bluff Creek Road. A contingency of engines remains on both fires throughout the nighttime hours.

North of the Bluff #1 Fire crews are holding and improving containment lines and will continue to conduct strategic firing operations when winds are favorable, working north to where the Blue Creek #2 Fire has reached the Bluff Creek Road which creates a check line to help slow the south movement of the Blue Creek #2 Fire. North of the Mosquito Fire, managers are evaluating opportunities to conduct firing operations today, with potential to secure the road as a control line from the north working south towards along the Go Road. Conditions are looking favorable to use Unmanned Aerial Systems (UAS) for strategic firing operations on the top of several ridges in the interior area between the Mosquito and Bluff #1 Fires. This strategic firing would reintroduce lighter intensity ground fire into the ecosystem as well as reduce the amounts of available fuels which otherwise have the potential to create higher intensity fires in the future. These ridges are within the established control lines that have been improved and secured with recent firing operations.

**Blue Creek #2** (11,289 acres, 0% contained) and **Marlow** (1,969 acres, 0% contained) **Fires** – These fires are bounded by indirect control lines to the east and south and prior fire footprints where fuels are lighter. Fire growth increased to the southeast on Blue Creek #2 yesterday due to north winds in the evening. The Blue Creek #2 Fire has moved south and to the Go Road. Some spots of fire also started south of the Go Road but within the area with contracted control lines. Blue Creek 2 and Marlow continue to be active, driven by winds interacting with terrain. No values are currently threatened. A Wildland Fire Module continues to monitor and assess conditions on the ground and air resources will monitor from above. Fire managers from the 2023 SRF Lightning Complex continue to coordinate with fire managers on the Happy Camp Complex due to the proximity of the Elliot Fire.

**Monument** (2 acres, 0% contained) and **Let er-Buck** (96 acres, 0% contained) **Fires** – A confinement strategy is being used to address these two fires due to limited values at risk and the remote, steep terrain with associated safety concerns for the firefighters. Terrain, natural fire barriers such as rock outcroppings, and old fire footprints where fuels are limited will be used to confine fire growth until season ending precipitation extinguishes the fires. These fires are checked regularly by aerial patrols to ensure they remain within acceptable bounds.

**Weather:** Temperatures will be warmer today with low humidity levels. Fire behavior will continue to be active in areas with low humidity with more activity on the eastern slopes. Temperatures are forecasted to range from 60-80 degrees based on elevation with light winds under 10 mph. Smoke will persist in the valleys throughout the day.

### Evacuation Information

Siskiyou County Office of Emergency Services: <https://www.co.siskiyou.ca.us/emergencyservices>

### Closures

**Six Rivers National Forest:** Area and campground closures are in effect on portions of Six Rivers National Forest. They can be found at: <https://www.fs.usda.gov/detail/srnf/notices/?cid=FSEPRD1096395>.

### Additional Fire Information

InciWeb: <https://inciweb.nwcg.gov/incident-information/casrf-2023-srf-lightning-complex-and-redwood-lightning-complex>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/2023SRFRedwoodLightning>

More Fire Information Links: [www.linktr.ee/srffirepio](http://www.linktr.ee/srffirepio)

For Air Quality Information: [www.airnow.gov](http://www.airnow.gov)

**NOTE:** For information about the Elliot or Hancock Fires which are part of the Happy Camp Complex, please visit <https://linktr.ee/happycampcomplex2023> .

