

# Fire Update

## 2023 SRF Lightning Complex

Sunday, September 24, 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 5 of the 14 fires being managed as part of the SRF Lightning Complex. The Copper Fire (2184 acres) was absorbed by the Blue Creek #2 Fire. On September 22, 2023, the Bluff #1 Fire (4270 acres) and Blue Creek #2 Fire (9751 acres) were absorbed by the Mosquito Fire. The combination of Blue Creek #2 Fire, Bluff #1 Fire, and Mosquito Fire is now referred to as the Mosquito 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 on this incident total 42,517 acres and overall containment is 8%. In total, 879 personnel are assigned to the incident. Following the very successful firing operations of the last several operational periods, today marks the start of a weather change. Wind direction may shift, and wind speed is forecasted to increase with the frontal system coming into the area. This may increase fire activity today in advance of the expected precipitation tomorrow. Firefighting operations will adjust to the gusty wind and future rain, focusing on holding the containment lines, extinguishing areas of heat along the lines, and watching for any wind-driven spotting from the fire into unburned areas.

For decades, “full suppression” has portrayed a message to contain fire whenever and wherever it happens to exist on the landscape. Though indirect strategies have been routinely implemented through the years, there has not necessarily been an emphasis toward reducing future wildland fire risk on individual wildland fires. Leveraging pre-identified control features within a suppression strategy can both suppress a wildland fire and reduce future risk to our communities and landscapes. We refer to those pre-identified control features as Potential Operational Delineation; otherwise, known as PODs.

**Pearch Fire** (11,131 acres, 6% contained) – The Structure Protection Group continues point protection of structures in the Butler Flats community and on the Salmon River Road, using hose and pumps, testing sprinklers, and maintaining readiness. **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.** Firefighters are using hand lines around structures if needed to stop fire progress and removing fuel available to burn. Along the south side of the Pearch Fire near Orleans, crews are holding and improving line. Additional engines are being allocated to the area around the confluence of the Salmon and Klamath Rivers to ensure the safety of the community as the wind speeds increase today. Firefighters are monitoring the fire as it backs downslope from ridgetops.

The northwest flank of the Pearch Fire continues to send material rolling downslope onto the Highway 96 corridor and crews are working with CalTrans to improve travel safety. Please reduce your speed if you are traveling through the fire area, watch your surroundings, and be prepared for smoky conditions and falling rocks and debris. The Unmanned Aerial Systems (UAS) successfully completed some firing operations, preventing the fire from making an uphill run by using low intensity fire to consume available fuels. An additional UAS collected infrared (IR) data on the fire, providing mapping information of fire activity and areas of heat.

**Mosquito Fire** (29,266 acres, 6% contained) – The mastication and chipping work continue, and crews are making progress along both the Slate Creek and Bluff Creek Roads. Crews will continue to patrol containment lines along the eastern side and along portions of the Go Road and along the Onion Creek Road, looking for areas of heat, and making sure fire does not move into unburned areas outside the fire area. A contingency of engines remains on both fires throughout the nighttime hours.

**Marlow Fire** (1,987 acres, 0% contained) – There was minimal activity on the Marlow Fire yesterday. This fire is in a remote area and is bounded by indirect control lines to the east and south and prior fire footprints where fuels are lighter. No values are threatened by the Marlow Fire. 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 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:** Cloud cover will increase today with the incoming frontal system and this is expected to impact the fire area for the next couple days. Humidity levels will rise in higher elevations, but the cloud cover can trap warm air in valleys, limiting overnight humidity recovery in the lower elevations. Today's temperatures will range from 53-73 with wind speeds increasing from 10-15 in the morning to 25 mph in the afternoon with gusts up to 30 mph on exposed ridges. The front is forecasted to bring light rain today with potential for precipitation increasing overnight and into Monday.

#### **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> .

