

Fire Update

2023 SRF Lightning Complex

Tuesday, September 26, 2023 – 9:00 a.m.



Eastern Area Gold Team

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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%. Due to cloud cover over the past couple of days we have not been able to complete an infrared flight to update the fire size. In total, 683 personnel are assigned to the incident. Yesterday, the predicted rainfall and cooler weather moved into the area and subdued fire activity. The weather conditions also increased the potential hazards of fire weakened trees falling without warning on all parts of the fires due to winds and wet soil conditions. The possibility of additional rocks and debris falling from steep slopes on to the roadways remains a concern with the amount of precipitation that has fallen. These conditions will continue to be monitored along Highway 96 and the Salmon River Road throughout the day. The night shift of firefighters ended on Sunday night due to decreased fire activity and the increased risk of exposure to hazards such as rocks and fire weakened trees falling without notice. When conditions dry out the fire activity will determine whether a night shift is needed again.

The plan for today will be for crews and equipment to move slowly and deliberately from the Fire Camp and back out to the fire area as weather and road conditions allow. It will take some time to allow the road system to dry out from the rain that has fallen. Fire weakened trees with root systems affected by wet soils have created hazardous conditions that fire crews will need to assess and mitigate before reengaging on the fire control lines. It may not be possible to get engines and equipment into certain areas until some drying conditions occur. Firefighters will assess the conditions and monitor the fire following the rain event. The rain that has fallen is being characterized as a season slowing event for fire activity.

Pearch Fire (11,131 acres, 6% contained) – The rain was delayed by a few hours yesterday which allowed the crews to monitor the fire area in the morning. Minimal fire activity was observed. There were small amounts of rocks and debris that fell on both the Salmon River Road and Highway 96 throughout the day. CalTrans and Siskiyou County crews and equipment remain available to clear the rocks and debris as needed. The crews staged on or near Highway 96 when the heavy rain started falling during the day. The amounts of debris falling onto the road is expected to continue because of the precipitation. Please continue to drive with caution and consider alternate routes.

An Evacuation Warning remains 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.

Mosquito Fire (29,266 acres, 6% contained) – Increased fire activity happened on Sunday afternoon, but cloudy conditions and rainfall subdued the activity yesterday. Crews attempted to check on fire growth in the Rock Creek area however, they were unable to provide an estimate on the increase in size. As the winds and rain started most of the crews and equipment staged at the Base Camp due to muddy and unstable road conditions. Some crews were able to shelter in place on the east side of the fire where safe to do so.

Marlow Fire (1,988 acres, 0% contained) – There continued to be minimal activity on the Marlow Fire. 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.

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: Yesterday, the large low-pressure system brought widespread rainfall across the fire area. Throughout the day portions of the fire received anywhere from 2 inches of rain in the lower elevations to 4 inches of rain in the higher elevations. Today, the weather is expected to be mostly cloudy with scattered rain showers. Temperatures will range from 65 to 70 degrees in the valleys to 79 to 84 degrees on the slopes and ridges. Humidity levels will be as low as 45 to 55 percent. Winds will be from the southwest at 10 to 15 mph. The chance of rain will continue to be around 60 percent.

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

For Air Quality Information: 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> .

