

Fire Update

2023 SRF Lightning Complex

Saturday, September 17, 2023 – 9:00 a.m.



Eastern Area Type 2 Gold Team

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Information Staffing Hours: 8 am to 8 pm

This update covers 8 of the 14 fires being managed as part of the SRF Lightning Complex. 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 25,700 acres and overall containment is 6%. This reduction in containment percentage from days prior is a result of strategic firing operations and the number of fires that are now being managed under the Eastern Area Gold Team and not due to a substantial growth in fire acreage. The 8 uncontained fires described below total 25,666 acres. These fires are all on the Six Rivers National Forest. In total, 919 personnel are assigned to the incident.

Fire, weather, and fuels conditions on the 2023 SRF Lightning Complex continue to be favorable for using strategic firing operations to accomplish fire suppression objectives and protect communities, cultural resources, and other values. Strategic firing under current conditions is proving successful in cleaning up accumulated excess fuels on the forest floor with low intensity understory burns showing 2 to 4 foot flame lengths. Firing is progressing at a methodical pace that permits monitoring of effectiveness and making adjustments as needed. Engines are being deployed at night in locations where firing has occurred to guard against any unexpected fire behavior.

Pearch Fire (6657 acres, 8% contained) – Yesterday, fire managers observed similar fire behavior with fire slowly backing downhill into the Butler Creek and a portion of Somes Creek drainages on the northeastern side of the fire. By mid-afternoon winds began to gust up to 30 mph and the eastern edge of the fire received moderate rain. Due to safety concerns, firefighters were removed from the interior. Once it was safe to do so, crews began checking containment lines and secured any areas of concern. Yesterday, the Structure Protection Group was able to test their plans and water systems and ensure they function well in the event they are needed. They will remain on the fire during both day and night shifts. Today, crews will continue to patrol completed fire lines, mop up and secure the fire perimeter on the south and west sides of the fire. No firing operations occurred on the Pearch Fire yesterday.

Bluff #1 (3621 acres, 29% contained) **and Mosquito** (4223 acres, 11% contained) **Fires** – Yesterday, crews were staged along the Onion Road and monitored the southern progression of the Bluff #1 Fire. There was minimal movement and crews will continue to patrol the area. On the north end of Bluff #1, crews mopped up the 50 acres that were strategically fired yesterday. Fire managers assessed the area and observed desired results. This led managers to strategically fire additional acres along a ridgeline to the north. Today as conditions allow, fire managers plan to strategically introduce fire into additional acres to the north of the Bluff #1 fire, along Bluff Creek Road. This tactic, as part of the full suppression strategy, will remove unburned fuels to strengthen containment line.

On the south end of the Mosquito Fire, the fire was moderately active as it continued to slowly back down west into the drainage. Crews utilized some strategic firing and maintained the southwestern containment line. On the north end, crews continued to mop and patrol a few minor hot spots as the fire continued slowly backing down to the west and north, parallel to Cedar Camp Road. Today, similar to Bluff #1 and if weather conditions allow, fire managers will strategically introduce fire along the southwestern and northern boundaries to strengthen containment.

A night shift of engines remained on both fires throughout the nighttime hours.

Blue Creek #2 (7024 acres, 0% contained), **Marlow** (1867 acres, 0% contained), and **Copper** (2184 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 was moderate yesterday with a few interior snag pockets putting up small smoke columns due to the thunderstorm and wind shift. No values are currently threatened. Blue Creek #2 and Copper Fires have now burned together, as expected. An 8-person Wildland Fire Module continues to monitor and assess conditions on the ground and air resources will monitor from above. Masticators finished brush removal work along the Nickowitz Road to open access to the south end of the fires. Fire managers from the 2023 SRF Lightning Complex are coordinating daily with fire managers on the Happy Camp Complex due to the proximity of the Elliot Fire (part of Happy Camp Complex).

Monument (2 acres, 0% contained) and **Let er-Buck** (88 acres, 0% contained) **Fires** – Due to limited values at risk, the remote, steep terrain and associated safety concerns for our firefighters, and the low probability of success using standard suppression tactics, these fires are being addressed with a confinement strategy. 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, and very little fire growth has been observed.

Weather: Today there is a chance of isolated thunderstorms this afternoon and evening. These will likely stay to the south and east of the Complex. This may bring strong outflow winds near the complex. Up-canyon winds 10-15 mph will develop this afternoon and evening in larger valleys. Highs will be in the upper 80s in the valleys and upper 70s to lower 80s on ridges. Smoke will persist in the valleys through the day. An afternoon westerly sea breeze ridge wind may bring some clearing to western areas above 3000 feet.

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.nwecg.gov/incident-information/casrf-2023-srf-lightning-complex-and-redwood-lightning-complex>

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

Hoopaa Information Hotline: Phone: 530-618-2995 | Email: serene.oes@gmail.com

More Fire Information Links: www.linktr.ee/srffirepio

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



www.linktr.ee/srffitrpio



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