



BUTTE LIGHTNING COMPLEX

Fact Sheet

Saturday, June 28, 2008 8:00 a.m.

www.fire.ca.gov



Information Line: 530-538-7826

Incident Name: Butte Lightning Complex **Incident Number:** CABTU007660

Location: Butte County

Command Team: CAL FIRE Incident Command Team #9

Lightning Complex Start Date: June 21, 2008

Incident Type: Wildland Fire **Acres:** 12,400 Acres **Cause:** Lightning

% Containment: 15% **Estimated Containment:** 07/9/08

Fatalities: 0 **Injuries:** 6 minor injuries to firefighters

Structures Destroyed: 2

Structures Damaged: None determined **Structures Threatened:** 1,200 residences

Resources: Hand Crews 22	Dozers 26	Engines 230	Helicopters 7	Tankers 2
Water Tenders 28	Overhead Personnel 226	Total Personnel: 1,606		

The Butte Lightning Complex currently consists of 31 fires divided into geographical branches to allow for coordination, management, and accountability of resources. The current Branches are listed below and only fires that currently pose the highest potential threat are identified by name. The fires are evaluated daily to determine risk potential. Evacuations and Road Closures are listed on page two.

Concow Branch:

- **Rim Fire** – 900 acres, burning in the area of Rim Road and Hwy. 70. Fire continues to threaten the community of Concow. Fire Crews made progress on this fire during the night securing the northern edge.
- **Empire/Sawmill Fire** – 3,000 acres, actively burning north of Hog Ranch Road at the northern end of the Concow Reservoir. Progress is being made putting in line to stop the westward spread of the fire to protect the threatened community of Concow. Today fire crews will be concentrating on securing the south and east flanks of the fire.

Stirling Branch:

- **West Fire** – 3,000 acres, the fire is still burning on the east side of the West Branch of the Feather River drainage. Dozers continue to cut line across the ridge top to prevent fire from crossing to the west side. Two structures have been destroyed in the Old Utah Mine Area of this fire.
- **Break Neck** – 180 acres, burning in an area north and east of Stirling City. Active fire occurred yesterday when the inversion lifted in the afternoon. Air and ground forces were able to contain a ½ acre slop over on the west side. Fire officials are hoping to have this fire contained in 1-2 days.

-More-

Hwy 32 Branch:

- **Smokey/Little Smokey** – 1500+ acres, Progress continues on construction of a dozer containment line. This fire is burning west of Hwy 32 in Tehama County South of Soda Springs and is a threat to Butte Meadows and Jonesville. The fire has been held on the east and south sides with active burning still occurring within the northeast corner of the fire where crowning (fire burning in the tops of trees, moving from one treetop to another) took place yesterday afternoon when the inversion layer lifted. Due to clearer sky conditions helicopters were able to work in the area yesterday.

South Fork Branch:

- **Frey Fire** – 1500+ acres, burning north of La Porte Road near Jackson Ranch with rough, steep terrain. The South Fire on the Plumas National Forest is north of this incident and efforts are being made to construct dozer line to prevent the fires from joining. There is no immediate threat to populated areas just significant growth potential when the inversion lifts. Overnight good progress was made on the Frey Fire and is expected to continue as more air and ground support become available.

Hwy 70 Branch:

- **Camp Fire:** 5000+ acres, the fire is actively burning on both sides of Hwy. 70 near the Plumas National Forest Boundary. The fire crossed the highway and has now joined with several fires on the south side of Hwy. 70 near Elephant Ridge. Several fires on this branch and on the adjoining Plumas National Forest are expected to join together with a potential for 23,000 acres.

Road Closures:

Jordan Hill Rd.@ Coutolenc Rd. (6 miles in)
Hupp-Coutolenc Rd. between Skyway and Coutolenc Rd. (open to residents only)
Coutolenc Rd. between Lower Skyway and Upper Skyway (open to residents only)
Hwy 32 (Tehama Co.) one-way controlled traffic at various locations from 12 miles west to 8.9 miles west of the junction of Hwy 36
Hwy 70 from Big Bend Rd. to Hwy 89 (Greenville Y)
Pinkston Canyon Rd. from Hwy 70 to Concow Rd.
Deadwood Rd. from Hwy 70 to Concow Rd.
Lunt Road at Hwy 70
Andy Mt Rd. / Rim Rd. @ Big Bend Rd
Bardee's Bar Rd.@ Big Bend Rd.
Jordan Hill Rd.@ Concow Rd.
French Creek Rd. @ Oro-Quincy Hwy
4 Mile Ridge Rd. (Forest Service road) @ Oro-Quincy Hwy
Oro-Quincy Hwy (open to thru traffic ONLY from Mt. House Rd. to Bucks Lake)

Immediate Threat Evacuation Advisories:

Concow Road @ Jeffery Pine Lane North to Rim Road including all tributary roads
Andy Mt. Rd/Rim Rd
Crain Ridge/Ponderosa way
Hwy 70 from the CAL FIRE Station 36 to Pulga Road
Pulga Road from Hwy. 70 to the end of Pulga Road

Precautionary Evacuation Advisories:

Coutolenc Road from Skyway to Hupp-Coutolenc Road and all cross streets
Jonesville
Butte Meadows
Big Bend Road and tributaries which also includes Dark Canyon Road and Paiute

Evacuation Centers -

Spring Valley School – 530-895-0000
2771 Pentz Road (Corner of Hwy 70 and Pentz Road)

Las Plumas High School - 530-538-2740
2380 Las Plumas, Oroville

Neighborhood Church – 530-343-6006
2801 Notre Dame Blvd., Chico

Animal Evacuation Centers –

Small Animals: Spring Valley School – 530-895-0000
2771 Pentz Rd (Corner of Hwy 70 and Pentz Road)
Large Animals: Chico State Farms
Hagen Lane between Park Ave. and Dayton Rd. in Chico (Open from 8am-5pm)

Current Situation:

Progress was made yesterday on several of the priority fires. Efforts and resources are being concentrated on fires that are threatening communities. The inversion layer lifted late in the afternoon affecting the Smokey, Breakneck, and Camp Fires. Seven Helicopters were used on fires where the inversion lifted. There has been no change in the Evacuation or road closures this operational period.

The weather forecast for Saturday and Sunday is for a potential for isolated thunderstorms and dry lightning. A Fire Weather Watch is in effect for today with a probability of it being upgraded to a Red Flag Warning. Fire officials are very concerned about the potential for additional fire starts if lightning occurs. A lightning Plan has been prepared by CAL FIRE and the Butte Unit to prepare for new fire starts. In addition, the potential thunderstorms will produce significant winds that will affect the current fires. Additional resources are still arriving from throughout the state to assist with the firefighting efforts.

It is important to reiterate that all residents who live in or near the affected areas should maintain a heightened state of awareness as this fire complex is still actively burning. Officials are encouraging residents to monitor the fire situation in and around their area via the local radio and television outlets as well as CAL FIRE at www.fire.ca.gov and the Butte County website at www.buttecounty.net. If conditions change, fire and law enforcement officials will make immediate notification to keep the public informed.

GENERAL:

As a result of the large number of significant fires throughout California, firefighting resources are limited and priorities for resources allocation are being continually re-evaluated based on incident threat to life and property.

Additionally, fire officials are asking that as July 4th approaches citizens exercise extra caution to prevent new fires. Citizens should be aware of any legal fire restrictions and regulations in their area.

As a result of poor visibility due to smoke and the increased volume of emergency vehicles on the roadways citizens are asked to use diligence and caution when traveling throughout the affected areas.

Officials would like to thank the residents for their continued cooperation and preparedness during this natural disaster. Every effort will be made to return evacuated residents to their homes as soon as it is safe to do so.