



# BUTTE LIGHTNING COMPLEX

## Up-Dated Fact Sheet



Sunday, June 29, 2008 2:20 p.m.  
[www.fire.ca.gov](http://www.fire.ca.gov)



**Information Line: 530-538-7826**

**\*\*\*\* NEW INFORMATION REGARDING EVACUATIONS AND ROAD CLOSURES\*\*\*\***

**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:** 16,000 Acres **Cause:** Lightning

**% Containment:** 20% **Estimated Containment:** 07/9/08

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

**Structures Destroyed:** 2 ( in the area of the Utah Mine site)

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

**Resources:** Hand Crews 28      Dozers 49      Engines 230      Helicopters 7      Tankers 2  
Water Tenders 49      Overhead Personnel 246      Total Personnel: 1,895

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 below.

### Concow Branch:

- **Rim Fire** – 1,758 acres, burning in the area of Rim Road and Hwy 70. The fire is still poses a threat to the community of Concow, however, Fire and Law Enforcement officials are evaluating a change in the evacuation status. Structures previously stated as being destroyed have been verified as **not** having been destroyed.
- **Empire Fire** – 3,000 acres, the fire is still burning on the east side of the West Branch of the Feather River drainage and north of Hog Ranch Rd. at the northern end of Concow Reservoir. The West Fire and the Empire Fire now have merged. Today's focus for fire crews is to continue securing the south/west corner of this fire. Two structures have been destroyed in the Old Utah Mine Area.

### 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.
- **Breakneck** – 210 acres, 50% contained, 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 spot over on the west side. Fire officials are hoping to have this fire contained in 1-2 days.

### Hwy 32 Branch:

- **Smokey**– 1500+ acres, 70 % contained. 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. Fire officials are looking to contain this fire within the next 2 days.

-More-

### **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. Containment is expected within 2-3 days if current weather conditions continue.

### **Hwy 70 Branch:**

- **Camp Fire:** 2815+ 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 may 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)

Andy Mt Rd. /Rim Rd. @Hwy. 70

Bardee's Bar Rd. @ Big Bend Rd.

Concow Rd. @ end of pavement

Jordan Hill Rd. @ Hoffman 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:**

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:**

Andy Mt. Rd/Rim Rd

Crain Ridge/Ponderosa Way

Coutolenc Road from Skyway to Hupp-Coutolenc Road and all cross streets

Jonesville

Butte Meadows

Big Bend Road and all cross streets, which also includes Dark Canyon Road and Paiute

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### **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:**

**\*\*\*\*\*New\*\*\*\*\***

**Evacuation Status Changes - Concow Community status downgraded to “Precautionary Evacuation Advisory”**

**CAL FIRE, the Butte County Sherriff’s Office and allied agencies have downgraded the evacuation advisory for the Concow Community from an “Immediate Threat Advisory” to a “Precautionary Evacuation Advisory”. Residents are allowed back into the area but are cautioned that should fire conditions warrant, the advisory may once again be up-graded to “Immediate Threat Evacuation Advisory”. Citizens returning to the area should be aware of fire personnel and equipment working in the vicinity. Small animals that were evacuated to the Spring Valley Evacuation Center can be picked up throughout the day (Sunday, June 29<sup>th</sup>) before 5:00 p.m. Animals not picked up before 5:00 p.m. will be transported to the new location at Las Plumas High School, 2380 Las Plumas Ave. in Oroville. Previously evacuated large animals should be left with family, friends, or the Chico State Farm evacuation location for the duration of the “Precautionary Evacuation Advisory”. This will prevent an additional large animal evacuation if the threat is elevated and an “Immediate Threat Evacuation Advisory” is issued.**

Progress continued through the night on the priority fires. Efforts and resources are still being concentrated on fires that are threatening communities. The inversion layer that was expected to lift, late in the afternoon yesterday, failed to materialize. Aircraft support remains dependant on air quality. In the Feather River Canyon area fire activity continues to increase during the early morning hours between 4:00 a.m. – 9:00 a.m. due to the return of normal wind patterns.

Community meetings were held yesterday in the communities of Magalia, Concow and Butte Meadows. Fire officials met with evacuees and area residents to update the progress of the fires and address concerns of community members. The meetings were well attended by the community and fire officials appreciated the opportunity to meet with people directly affected by the fires.

The weather forecast for today calls for the inversion layer to lift to approximately 1500 ft. around 12:00 p.m. in the valley. The inversion may remain in the canyon and drainage areas from the 1500 ft to 3000 ft level from Paradise eastward. No thunderstorm activity is predicted for today. The Red Flag Warning has been lifted.

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It is important to reiterate that all residents who live in or near the affected areas should continue to 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](http://www.fire.ca.gov) and the Butte County website at [www.buttecounty.net](http://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 resource allocation are being continually re-evaluated based on incident threat to life and property.

Additionally, fire officials are asking that as July 4<sup>th</sup> 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.

END