



BUTTE LIGHTNING COMPLEX

Fact Sheet

Thursday, July 3, 2008 8:00 am.
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 Complex

Number of Fires: 36 **Number of Active Fires:** 13 (11 have merged) **Number of Contained Fires:** 12

Total Acres for all fires: 20,000 Acres **Cause:** Lightning

% Containment: 40% **Estimated Containment:** *07/14/08*

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

Structures Destroyed: 2

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

Resources: Hand Crews 41 Dozers 56 Engines 251 Helicopters 12 Tankers 0
Water Tenders 63 Overhead Personnel 297 Total Personnel: 2,408

The Butte Lightning Complex currently consists of 36 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. Daily coordination has been taking place between the Plumas National Forest, the Lassen National Forest and CAL FIRE regarding fires near or adjacent to the Butte Complex Fires. The Canyon Complex on the Plumas National Forest managed by USFS Incident Command Team # 3 took over command of the Frey Fire Tuesday. Every effort is being used to coordinate incidents occurring in geographical areas to insure firefighter safety and to make the best use of resources, personnel and logistical support. Evacuations and road closures are listed on page two and three.

Concow Branch:

- **Rim Fire (1,758 acres, 100% Contained)** – Residents of Concow are still on a precautionary evacuation. Even though the Rim fire has been contained the local residents should remain vigilant and alert to fire conditions and equipment operating in the area.
Mop up continues on this contained fire.
- **Empire Fire / West Fire (5200 acres, 45% contained)** – The fire is still holding 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 have merged. The focus for fire crews is to continue securing the south/west corner of this fire. Eleven helicopters were able to work on various fires yesterday. Two structures were destroyed in the Old Utah Mine Area. Areas of indirect fire line are continuously being monitored closely for hot spots. Mop up operations are continuing. Containment is expected sometime tomorrow.

Stirling Branch:

- **Breakneck (210 acres, 90% contained)** – The fire is burning in an area north and east of Stirling City. The fire continues to flare up along the line. There was a two acre spot fire from the fire yesterday afternoon which was contained. Helicopters continue to work hot spots along the line in conjunction with the ground resources.

Hwy 32 Branch:

- **Smokey (1,700+ acres, 85% contained)** – 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 is being held on the east and south sides with active burning still occurring within the northeast corner of the fire. Good progress was made again yesterday but due to increased fire behavior containment is now expected in two days.
***** **New******* Fire officials are anticipating containment of this fire in two more days.

Hwy 70 Branch:

- **Camp Fire (9,600 acres)** – The fire is actively burning on both sides of Hwy 70 near the Plumas National Forest boundary. Several fires on this branch and the Plumas National Forest have joined together with a potential for 23,000 acres. A 7 mile long burning operation was successfully conducted took place last night that was 7 miles long. At this time the main threat is to the transmission lines from the numerous Hydroelectric Plants on the Feather River that run throughout the fire area.
- **Frey Fire** – Fire command of Canyon Complex is under Federal Incident Command Team 3.
- **Pit Fire** - Dozers worked on the north, west and east side of the fire yesterday and continue to make good progress. However air resources were not able to provide support yesterday because of smoke conditions. Today crews, dozers and aircraft will be working to keep the fire west of Hwy.70, south of Ben Lomond Trail.

Road Closures: ****NEW** Hwy 70 is closed from the Greenville “Y” (Hwy 89 and Hwy 70) on the east to 3 miles west of Pulga on the west (near the Plumas Forest boundary). Hwy 70 will be open to residents only from the Greenville “Y” to Belden. No civilian traffic will be permitted from Belden to Pulga.**

Concow Rd. at the end of the pavement

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.) Closed 13 miles east of Forest Ranch to junction of Hwy 36

Andy Mountain Rd. ½ mile up from Hwy. 70 (residents only)/ All of Rim Rd.

Bardee’s Bar Rd. @ Big Bend 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)

Jordan Hill Rd. at Hoffman Rd.

Immediate Threat Evacuation Advisories:

None are in place.

Precautionary Evacuation Advisories:

Concow
Coutolenc Road from Skyway to Hupp-Coutolenc Road and all cross streets
Jarbo Gap (west side)
Jonesville
Butte Meadows (including the Lassen Boy Scout Camp)
Big Bend Road and cross streets which also includes Dark Canyon Road and Paiute

Evacuation Centers: The Red Cross Evacuation Shelters transitioned to stand-by status at 4:00 p.m. Monday, June 30, 2008 and are no longer open. The Butte County EOC will monitor the situation closely to ensure that the care and sheltering needs of people and animals are provided if conditions change.

Animal Evacuation Centers: For additional information on the Animal Evacuation Shelters contact the Butte County EOC at 530-538-2739.

Small Animals: Las Plumas High School- This small animal shelter was closed.
Large Animals: Chico State Farm (Hagen Lane between Park Ave. and Dayton Rd. in Chico (Open from 8am-5pm)
*Residents on a Precautionary Evacuation are advised to keep large animals at the shelter (or with family and friends) away from the affected area until all evacuation orders have been lifted.

Current Situation:

Hwy. 70 has been closed from 3 miles west of Pulga to Hwy. 89 at the Greenville “Y”. The highway is being closed due to significant “rolling” materials from the fire areas. The rolling materials consist of large and small boulders, tree stumps, tree branches, trees, dirt, and other debris. A serious threat to the public and motorists exists along the highway. No through traffic will be allowed in the fire area. Residents living in Belden will be permitted access to their homes.

Progress continued throughout yesterday on the priority fires. Today’s weather will continue to be warmer and dryer with the inversion predicted to lift again by mid-morning. The predicted weather for the next few days will be hotter and dryer reaching the triple digits. This change in conditions will potentially cause fire activity to increase as was seen yesterday on the various fires. The inversion lifted yesterday allowing helicopters and tankers to do extensive work on most of the fires.

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, television and other media 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:

Fire officials are asking that as July 4th approaches citizens exercise extra caution to prevent new fires. All fireworks used by the public can potentially cause a threatening fire. Citizens should be aware of the fireworks restrictions and regulations in their area. There will be zero tolerance when it comes to illegal fireworks. We strongly encourage the public to enjoy the holiday by attending a professional fireworks display with their family.

Officials would like to thank the residents for their continued cooperation and preparedness during this natural disaster. Residents should remain aware of the situation. In addition, incident personnel continue to be overwhelmed by the communities’ continuing support of the firefighting efforts.