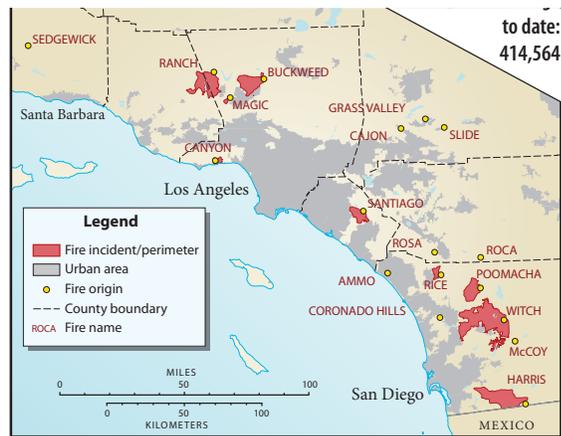


The Fires: Day 3

Tuesday, October 23, 2007



- President Bush signs Emergency Declaration FEMA-3279-EM-CA for seven California counties.

Predictive Services Morning Report:

Gusty Santa Ana winds will continue over portions of the region with sustained speeds between 15 and 25 miles per hour, gusting from the 30s-to-mid-40s. Gusty conditions will continue to be problematic, especially over San Diego County.

Today's Events:

With Santa Ana wind conditions expected to continue, existing firefighting resources are not sufficient to fill all resource requests from the siege fires. Southern California has eleven fires burning in seven counties: Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino, San Diego, Santa Barbara and Ventura.

Day three of the siege begins with reports of a new start; the **Poomacha Fire**, reported at 3:13 a.m. on the La Jolla Indian Reservation, in San Diego County. Starting in a structure, the fire quickly burns into six-foot-tall

Daily Snapshot

Incident Name	MACS Priority* a.m. / p.m.	Crews	Engines	Dozers	Overhead	Acres**	Contained %
Ammo [†]	- / 11	0	5	0	0	350	0
Buckweed	8 / 8	28	144	13	130	37,812	80
Canyon	9 / 10	17	90	3	99	4,500	75
Grass Valley	3 / 1	16	58	2	160	1,000	0
Harris	6 / 6	16	93	2	116	72,000	10
Magic	10 / 0	0	21	0	5	2,000	80
McCoy	- / -	1	5	0	4	300	95
Poomacha	5 / 3	8	20	4	145	20,000	0
Ranch	7 / 7	26	145	12	99	47,240	10
Rice	4 / 4	14	101	6	68	7,500	10
Rosa	11 / 9	7	34	4	12	411	70
Santiago	2 / 5	5	109	2	43	19,191	30
Slide	3 / 1	3	83	0	97	4,000	0
Witch	1 / 2	39	230	22	142	196,420	10
Contained Fires***		23	57	7	74	1,840	100
Totals		203	1,195	77	1,194	414,564	

* Multi-Agency Coordination System (MACS) priority setting for resource allocation is based on the following criteria: Life Threatening Situations, Real Property Threatened, High Damage Potential, Incident Complexity, Potential for Timely Containment.
 ** Figures for acreage are cumulative for the incident throughout the siege.
 *** When a fire is 100% contained, the fire name is deleted but the acreage burned and additional resources (used in mop-up) is added to the "Contained Fires" section.
 † Resource data for Ammo Fire does not include military personnel. Fire was on a Military Reservation. Data used above was extracted from the Incident Status Summary (ICS-209).

A game of cards helps keep fears at bay for displaced children in one of the many evacuation centers. Volunteers and employees of the American Red Cross provided support and supplies for thousands of fire victims.



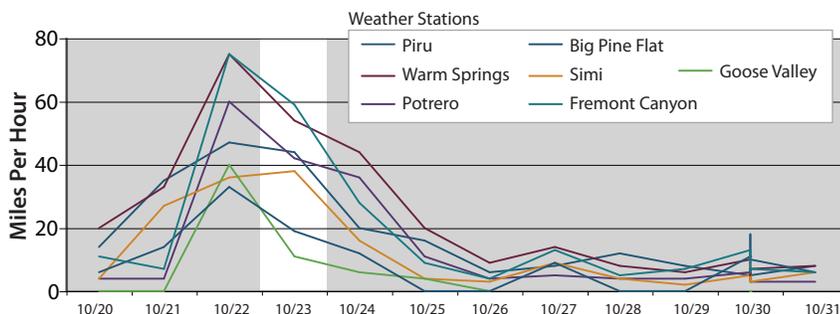
AMERICAN RED CROSS

chaparral. Driven by 50 mile per hour winds, the fire consumes 1,000 acres and threatens 2,000 residences in the Yellowbrick Road area of Valley Center. Reverse 911 evacuations are conducted for the entire Highway 76 corridor. Firefighters are unable to engage in direct fire suppression or formulate an effective strategy due to extreme fire behavior and limited resources at hand. Eight injuries are reported.

The Poomacha Fire increases substantially throughout the day. At one point the fire grows in size from 3,000 acres to 23,000 acres in an hour and a half. By afternoon, 50 residences have been destroyed. The fire threatens the communities of Valley Center, Rincon, and Deer Springs. Although some resources begin to arrive at the incident, no significant perimeter control has been initiated due to structure protection priorities as the fire burns toward Palomar Mountain.

The largest of the fires, the **Witch Fire**, continues to spread west and southwest passing through many communities. Multiple evacuations are ordered. In the early morning hours, there is a dramatic increase in wind and fire activity. The fire behavior is extreme with long-range spotting in excess of 1/4 mile and rapid rates of spread in excess of 2.5 miles-per-hour. Fire continues to burn through some areas very rapidly,

■ Peak Wind Speeds: October 20–31, 2007
October 23 highlighted



■ California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA) opened fairgrounds and other facilities to provide urgent shelter for displaced residents as well as horses and other animals threatened by the wildfires.

California Fire Siege October 23, 2007

leaving behind unburned fuels and creating a dangerous re-burn potential.

Mandatory evacuations take effect for Scripps Ranch, Rancho Bernardo, Poway, Valley Center, San Marcos, and Rancho Santa Fe. By dawn, 500 homes have been destroyed and 250 are damaged; 100 commercial buildings have been destroyed, and 75 damaged. More than 5,000 homes and 1,500 commercial buildings are still threatened. Hopes for containment are tempered due to competition for resources combined with predictions for more winds. By early afternoon, the Witch Fire destroys an additional 100 homes over a three-hour period.

The **Santiago Fire** morning report shows current acreage at 18,000 acres with 30% containment. While good progress is made along the north and west portions of the fire, red flag conditions produce extreme and erratic fire behavior. Numerous communities along the Santa Ana Canyon corridor remain threatened. While damage assessment is ongoing, early reports show 13 structures destroyed and 20 structures damaged. About 4,500 structures remain

California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (CDCR) mobilized more than 2,300 inmates and more than 170 custody staff to fight wildfires in Southern California.



Firefighters take quick action to suppress a spot fire on the roof of a structure.

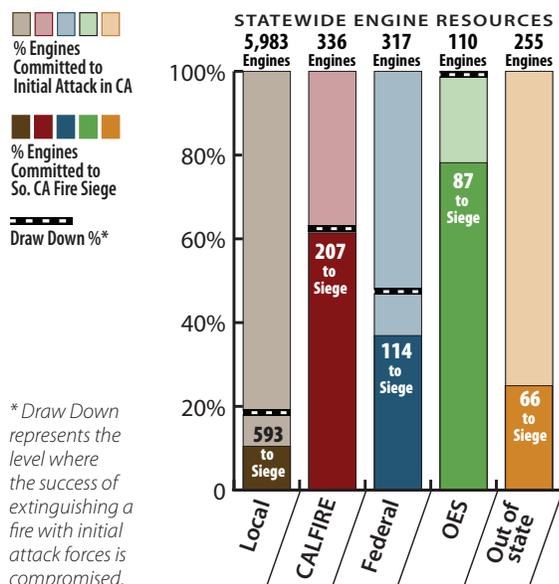
threatened. By noon, erratic winds push the fire in Modjeska Canyon, and threaten an additional 750 homes in the eastern foothill communities of Modjeska, Silverado and Santiago Canyons. Ground level winds are 20-to-30 miles per hour. Turbulence is moderate to severe for aircraft operating in the area. Air tankers are being used for limited structure protection and to put retardent imbs the lower ridges

above Modjeska Canyon. Smoke creates visibility problems throughout the day as the winds shift from offshore to on-shore. The ongoing competition for resources continues to hamper containment efforts.

By evening, some requested resources begin to arrive, and some progress is made. Extreme fire behavior

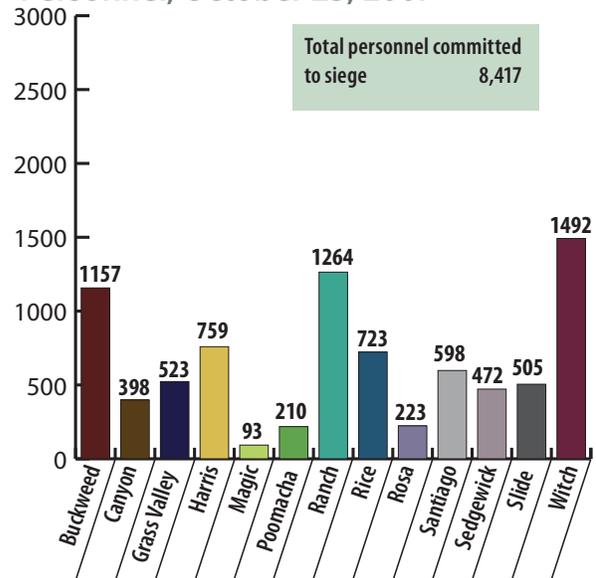
Resources Committed:

Engines, October 23, 2007



Resources Committed:

Personnel, October 23, 2007



continues with the wind-driven head of the fire running into the urban interface areas of the eastern Orange County foothills. The fire moves into the heavier fuels of the Cleveland National Forest and makes runs into the community of Modjeska Canyon. Six homes have been destroyed, and several more damaged. Structure protection proceeds in several eastern foothill canyon areas. Mandatory evacuations are ordered for Silverado, Modjeska, Williams, Ladd, Trabuco, Holy Jim and Live Oak Canyons.

■ California Emergency Services Authority activate Disaster Medical Assistance Teams (DMATs) from New Mexico and Washington.

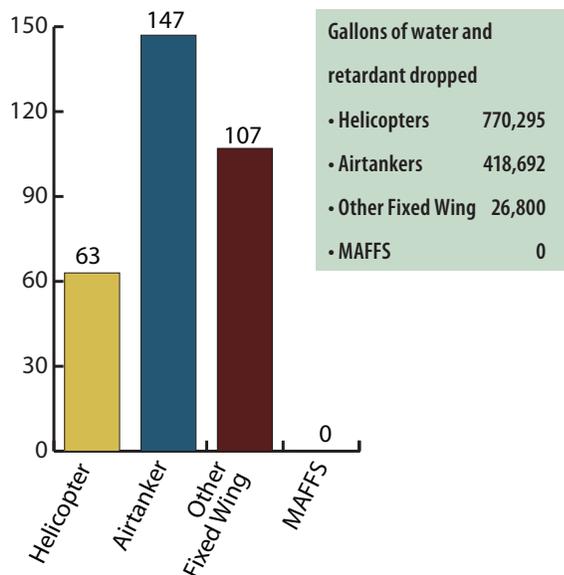
With the fires burning at extreme rates of spread, the **Slide/Grass Valley** fires still threaten hundreds of structures. Mandatory evacuations are ordered for Arrow Bear, Lake Arrowhead, Running Springs, Green Valley Lake, and Twin Peaks. All roads into the mountain communities are closed. The command teams from the Slide and Grass Valley incidents are now sharing meetings and resources. Extreme, wind-driven fire behavior, including group torching, crown runs and spotting, results in the Grass Valley fire making significant runs through structures. Aerial resources provide structure protection and cool the advancing flames so that ground resources can successfully engage. In several cases, ground crews have been unable to work on the fire's edge, and aerial resources are successfully used for structure protection.

Mandatory evacuations are in place from Crestline east to Snow Valley Ski Area. Voluntary evacuations are in effect west of Crestline, including Valley of the Enchanted and Cedar Pines Park. Evacuations to the south include North Highlands. The Mountains Community Hospital in Lake Arrowhead is evacuating patients.

Mountain Area Safety Taskforce (MAST) Plans are reviewed and implementation begins with available resources. Over 2,000 people are sheltered at evacuation centers. Closure of the San Bernardino National Forest is in effect, with limited open access. Early estimates state that between the Grass Valley and Slide Fire, nearly 300 structures have been damaged or consumed by the fire. The damage assessment team has limited access to confirm initial reports of damage. More than 10,000 structures remain threatened. Firefighter fatigue becomes a serious issue.

The entire community of Green Valley is evacuated as the Slide Fire surrounds the area. Firefighters were forced to withdraw from the area yesterday due to extreme fire behavior. The fire perimeter is currently within the community of Running Springs, with some loss of structures. The fire threatens several

■ Resources Committed: Aircraft, Flight Hours, October 23, 2007



■ Wind pushes fire and embers into structure

DAN ELLIOT

■ Governor Schwarzenegger, U.S. Department of Homeland Security Secretary Michael Chertoff, Federal Emergency Management Agency Administrator David Paulison and San Diego Mayor Jerry Sanders toured the emergency evacuation center at Qualcomm Stadium.



The “Devil Winds”

Santa Ana winds are a California firefighter’s nightmare. These blustery, dry, and often hot winds blow out of the desert and race through canyons and mountain passes on their way toward the coast. The air is hot not because it is bringing heat from the desert, but because it is flowing downslope from higher elevations. As summer ends and fall progresses, cold air begins to sink into the Great Basin deserts to the east of California. As the air piles up in the desert basins, high pressure builds and the air begins to flow downslope toward the coast. When winds blow downslope, the air is compressed, causing it to warm and dry out. In fact, the air can warm at a rate of 10 degrees Celsius per kilometer of descent (29 degrees Fahrenheit per mile). Canyons and passes funnel the winds, which increases their speed. Not only do the winds spread the fire, but they also dry out vegetation, making it even more flammable.

Courtesy NASA

communities in the Running Springs and Arrowbear, as well as Calvary Chapel Camp, National Children’s Forest and Visitors Center and Snow Valley and Nordic Rim ski areas.

Driven by 50 mile per hour winds, the Rice Fire makes major runs toward the town of Fallbrook and is positioned to burn into Santa Margarita and Sandia Creek Drainages. It is anticipated this fire will combine with the Rosa Fire. Reports indicate that as many as 500 residences may have been destroyed, and up to 30 damaged. Over 2,500 residences are currently threatened. Smoky conditions preclude the use of air tankers and only a limited number of helicopters are able to fly.

Evening provides no relief, and the Rice Fire continues to experience erratic and extreme fire behavior, with active burning in the Rainbow Glen area and the Santa Margarita drainage. Evacuation of the Deluz Canyon area is in progress. Red flag warnings will remain in effect until 3:00 p.m. tomorrow. Approximately 1,500 residences are threatened in Fallbrook. An estimated 20,000 avocado trees have been incinerated.

The Harris Fire reports extreme fire behavior due to weather conditions. The fire threatens to establish in the Otay River drainage and burn through Chula Vista. Most resource orders remain unfilled due to extraordinary resource competition. The fire burns over 100 homes in Deerhorn Valley and Honey Springs. Residents are sheltered at Fire Station 66. Fire moves rapidly to the west-southwest toward Chula Vista and Otay Lake, and north toward the south end of Barrett Lake. A critical power sub-station and a water treatment plant are endangered and firefighters are actively engaged in protection. An additional 200 to 500 homes have been destroyed or damaged, and more than 2,000 are still threatened. Almost 5,000 people are being evacuated, with more evacuations being ordered.

Smoke and weather conditions make air operations difficult and dangerous. However, aircraft is used to protect ground troops. By evening, the Harris Fire reports that a wind change aids in successful structure protection in Chula Vista and San Diego City toward Otay. The returning onshore flow moves the fire to the northeast and threatens structures along Highway 94 from Jamul to the east, and Jamacha to the west. The Evacuation Center at Steele Canyon is threatened where 200 people are sheltered in place. Structures are destroyed in the communities of: Lyons Valley, Lawson Valley, Rancho San Diego, Millar

Ranch, Indian Springs and Jamul. Two critical communications sites are threatened in San Miguel and Monte Vista.

One additional civilian suffers burns and is treated and transported to a local hospital. To date, one civilian has been killed by this fire and 21 civilians have been injured.

The Ranch Fire poses a threat to the communities of Fillmore, Piru, Ventura, and Ojai. Evacuations continue. The fire also threatens the Condor Sanctuary, Sespe Wilderness Area and Hopper Canyon National Wildlife Refuge. Major transmission lines are also threatened. Fire control problems continue due to extreme wind conditions, steep terrain and infrastructure challenges. Infrared Imagery indicate the areas embodying the most heat are on the north flank in Turtle Canyon and Sharps Canyon near the Day Fire (2006) burn, and to the west of Hopper Canyon. The Buckweed, Ranch and Magic fires are anticipated to burn together within 24-to-48 hours. The Magic and Ranch fires are now on opposite sides of Highway 126 at the Los Angeles/Ventura County line, about two miles apart.

By evening, the Ranch Fire experiences cautious optimism. The fire moves into Ventura County with some active backing fire in Violin Canyon near Interstate-5 and Castaic. Wind-driven runs advance toward Oat Mountain and Oak Flat. The fire begins to spread by rollout into Little Sespe Creek. The prediction of the Ranch, Buckweed, and Magic fires merging is no longer a concern.

Reports from the Buckweed Fire show moderate fire behavior. The fire continues to threaten a large number of residential and commercial structures in the communities of Santa Clarita, Castaic and Mint Canyon. By evening, major progress on line construction is made with little to no spread expected. Evacuations are lifted for all areas except Bouquet Canyon. The fire stands at 80% contained.

The Magic Fire is caught quickly and full containment is expected on October 24.

With decreased winds, firefighters on the Canyon Fire continue to make effective progress. The fire reports 75% containment and the demobilization of resources begins.

On the Rosa Fire, poor water supply and limited road access leads to competition between fire equipment and evacuees. However, good progress is made overnight with direct fire line construction. By evening, evacuation and road closure restrictions are lifted.

As progress is being made on some incidents, a new start is reported. At 9:20 a.m., the Ammo Fire starts at the Camp Pendleton Marine Corp Base, in San Diego County. Erratic fire behavior was observed as the fire burned into dense chaparral over steep terrain. Some mandatory evacuations occur within the camp. By evening, the Ammo Fire reports 50% containment at 3,000 acres, with full containment expected on October 25.

Meanwhile, good progress is made on the **Cajon Fire**, which reports 90% containment at 250 acres.

■ A toll-free phone line was set up for businesses to use for the efficient collection and distribution of large quantity donations to evacuation centers.