

CAL FIRE Report

July 29, 2019

From the CAL FIRE Information Center, I'm Scott McLean with the CAL FIRE Report for Monday, July 29, 2019.

Last week, California faced scorching temperatures and extremely dry conditions, leading to over 275 new wildfires starting across all jurisdictions, with 227 of those starting within CAL FIRE's jurisdiction. While the majority of those fires were kept under 10 acres, there were a few that did grow into larger incidents.

Taking a look at our Statewide Fire Map, you can see that currently 7 significant wildfires are active as of right now. 4 of those are US Forest Service incidents that CAL FIRE is assisting with. 3 of those fires are up in the far north in Modoc and Siskiyou Counties, and one down in Santa Barbara County.

Let's take a quick look now at the other 3 incidents, starting in Mendocino County with the Usal Fire. The Usal Fire started on Saturday night near the Usal Campground. At least 100 campers in the area were forced to shelter in place during the initial stages of the fire as firefighters began to establish containment around the blaze. As of this morning, the Usal fire is 130 acres and 40% contained.

Next, we'll move to San Bernardino County where firefighters are battling the Star Fire. That fire started Sunday in the Chino Hills during yesterday's exceptionally hot and dry weather, and quickly grew to over 150 acres. According to the City of Chino, the Star Fire is now 80% contained.

And lastly, yesterday in San Diego County, the Dehesa Fire sparked east of El Cajon in the Community of Dehesa. That fire grew to 150 acres overnight, but firefighters now have it 50% Contained and have stopped the forward spread of the flames.

So what are we looking at in the forecast for the upcoming week? The good news is that we're expecting a little bit of relief from last week's extreme heat, with a return to more seasonally normal temperatures. The bad news is that seasonal temperatures are still very hot and dry, with many areas staying in the 90s or even higher. And humidity is expected to still remain low as well, which means we've still got a lot of potential for new fires all across the state.

Additionally, in Southern California we're expecting breezy winds today and tomorrow in and around Santa Barbara County, as well as windy conditions along the central coast through Thursday, all of which will fan any new fires that start in the hot and dry weather that I just mentioned. So please, be very careful out there.

And that's the latest on the fire situation in California. But before we close out today, we wanted to take a moment to reflect on some very unfortunate occurrences over the past couple of days. First, as most of you have probably already heard by now, yesterday a gunman opened fire on visitors at the Gilroy Garlic Festival in Gilroy, killing 3 and injuring many more. CAL FIRE continues to work closely with police and first responders during this terrible tragedy, and offers our deepest condolences to the friends and family of the victims of the shooting.

And early this morning, we also lost one of our own in the San Diego Unit. Fire fighter Yaroslav Katkov suffered a medical emergency in the line of duty, which sadly took his life. Please join us in keeping Yaro and his loved ones in our thoughts during this difficult time. Thank you.