



NEWS



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Rialto fire burns 147 acres; firefighters mitigate structure threat

Staff Writer, ABC 7 News

Posted: November 14, 2018, 7:16 pm

RIALTO, Calif. (KABC) -- A brush fire in the Rialto area of San Bernardino County burned more than 140 acres by Wednesday morning after erupting the previous night.

The blaze, dubbed the Sierra Fire, was reported shortly after 9 p.m. on Tuesday near Sierra and Riverside avenues, according to the **San Bernardino County Fire** Department.

By late Wednesday, the fire was 85 percent contained after burning 147 acres, authorities said, confirming that structure threat has been mitigated.

The fire appeared to lose strength as it moved south and away from homes late Tuesday night. It had grown from about 3 acres to approximately 20 acres within minutes of ignition.

Crews in fire trucks and a bulldozer immediately responded to the blaze while strong wind gusts appeared to move most of the flames away from nearby homes.

Despite the direction of the fire, embers from the blaze jumped Riverside Avenue, where some backyards and at least one palm tree caught fire in the Ferguson Park neighborhood.

Firefighters worked against the 50 mph winds to spray water on the flaming palm tree, whose glowing embers jumped on multiple houses and caused major concern.

A number of power lines also appeared to catch fire as the wind-driven flames continued to quickly move near the neighborhood. Lights were also out in some parts of the area.

No structures were spotted on fire.

Meantime, footage from AIR7 HD showed residents packing their vehicles, though no official evacuation orders were announced. Traffic also built up along Locust Avenue as homeowners attempted to flee the area.

According to the San Bernardino County Fire Department, a total of 26 engines, seven hand crews, three bulldozers and one sheriff's department patrol helicopter were assigned to the fire.

<https://abc7.com/sierra-fire-wind-driven-blaze-burns-147-acres-in-rialto/4686598/>

Wind-whipped Sierra Fire burns 150 acres in San Bernardino County

Michael McGough, The Sacramento Bee

Posted: November 14, 2018

A 150-acre fire burning in San Bernardino County has been mostly contained with structure threats mitigated, but not before the wind-driven blaze created a frightening scene Wednesday.

The Sierra Fire, breaking out overnight between Sierra and Locust avenues north of Highway 210 near San Bernardino, required a unified command of Cal Fire, **San Bernardino County Fire** District and the Rialto Fire Department as crews used three dozers to fight the wind-fueled blaze. At least 26 fire engines responded.

San Bernardino County Fire said in an 8 a.m. update that the fire was holding at 147 acres and was 75 percent contained.

The Sierra Fire did not prompt evacuations. No injuries were reported and no structures destroyed, according to Cal Fire.

Dramatic video footage shared by San Bernardino County Fire and nearby residents show how heavy winds are worsening fire hazards in Southern California.

<https://www.sacbee.com/news/state/california/fires/article221649120.html>

Sierra Fire: Fire breaks out near homes in Rialto area of San Bernardino County

Jermaine Ong, abc 10 News

Posted: November 14, 2018

(KGTV) - Residents evacuated their homes after a brush fire erupted Tuesday evening and burned near their Rialto-area homes.

The so-called Sierra Fire was first reported shortly before 11 p.m. in an area near Sierra and Riverside avenues, according to San Bernardino County fire officials.

The blaze quickly charred 20 acres and moved close to several homes, but while an evacuation order was not issued, numerous residents chose to evacuate on their own.

As of 2 p.m. Wednesday, **San Bernardino County fire** officials said the Sierra Fire has burned 147 acres and is 85 percent contained., with "the structure threat mitigated."

No injuries or structure damage have been reported.

<https://www.10news.com/news/u-s-world/sierra-fire-fire-breaks-out-near-homes-in-rialto-area-of-san-bernardino-county>

Sierra Fire burns nearly 150 acres

Paola Baker, Daily Press

Posted: November 14, 2018, 7:26 pm

FONTANA — Firefighters got a handle on a fast-moving brush blaze that began late Tuesday.

Dubbed the Sierra Fire, the blaze scorched 147 acres after it broke out near Sierra and Riverside Avenues at around 9:30 p.m. Tuesday.

Driven by strong winds, the blaze grew quickly, with **San Bernardino County Fire** Department officials reporting it had spread to 20 acres by 10:15 p.m. that night.

The flames briefly threatened structures near Riverside Avenue, and authorities shut down the roadway between Sierra and Locust avenues to protect homes and other nearby buildings.

Firefighters from CalFire's San Bernardino (BDU) unit, along with crews from the Rialto Fire Department and County Fire, were all summoned to combat the flames.

Crews reached 85 percent containment on the fire as of Wednesday afternoon, CalFire BDU spokesman Henry Herrera said. No buildings were destroyed by the flames, and no one was hurt.

"There were no structures burned and no evacuations," Herrera said. "Riverside Avenue was opened back up around noon (Thursday)."

<http://www.vvdailynews.com/news/20181114/sierra-fire-burns-nearly-150-acres>

Sierra Fire: New Blaze Erupts In San Bernardino County

Hoa Quách, Patch

Posted: Nov 14, 2018, 12:50 pm



The blaze erupted Tuesday night near Rialto, quickly growing to 147 acres with the help of strong Santa Ana winds.

RIALTO, CA -- Firefighters had a new battle on their hands Wednesday morning after a blaze erupted Tuesday night in Rialto, quickly growing to 147 acres with the help of strong Santa Ana winds.

Dubbed the Sierra Fire, the fire began at three acres before growing to 20 acres. By Wednesday morning, fire officials reported the blaze had burned 147 acres because of "relentless" 50 miles-per-hour winds, the **San Bernardino County Fire** District said.

Fire officials said the fire was 75 percent contained Wednesday morning.

No evacuations were ordered but media reports indicated many residents self-evacuated. Crews were also monitoring nearby neighborhoods for embers.

Riverside Avenue between Sierra and Locust avenues was closed.

The Sierra Fire is the most recent wildfire to erupt in California as the state mourns the loss of 50 people with the death toll expected to rise. More than 200,000 acres have burned in the Camp, Hill and Woolsey fires, taking with it thousands of homes and commercial buildings.

Strong gusts are expected to continue Wednesday with utilities turning off the power in several cities with the hope of preventing anymore disasters.

No other information about the Sierra Fire was immediately available.

<https://patch.com/california/redlands/sierra-fire-new-blaze-erupts-san-bernardino-county>

Local man on the line at Malibu fire

Jené Estrada', Hi-Desert Star

Posted: November 14, 2018

MALIBU — More than 300 square miles in California is on fire and one of the Morongo Basin's own firefighters has joined the fight. Battalion Chief Scot Tuttle, a Morongo Basin resident and a San Bernardino County firefighter, is with a strike team protecting structures affected by the Woolsey Fire in Malibu.

“We took a strike team of five **San Bernardino County fire** engines from all over the county,” Tuttle said. “We left here at about 3 a.m. on Friday and they put us to work on the line in Thousand Oaks the first day.”

The Woolsey Fire began Nov. 8, minutes after Southern California Edison reported an electric circuit outage in the area. While the cause of the fire is still undetermined, many factors, including high winds and dry climate, have spurred a fast-spreading blaze. The fire had burned over 152 square miles — roughly the size of the entire Morongo Basin — by Wednesday afternoon.

The fire was 47 percent contained and had killed at least three people and destroyed at least 483 structures and killed at least two victims, according to Cal Fire.

“Since the first day we have been over in the west hills area of Los Angeles on structure defense and patrolling hot spots,” Tuttle said.

Teams on structure defense are on the outskirts of the burn area using their rigs and their water supplies to block the flames from spreading and destroying more structures, Tuttle said. Their work has allowed some of the more than 250,000 people evacuated from the area to return to their homes to salvage what is left from the flames. Many, however, are finding they have nothing left.

Charity groups in the cities affected by the fires are accepting donations of food, money and clothing for those who have lost their homes.

“The community support has been great,” Tuttle said. “If people want to help, please focus on the families who lost their homes in the fires. We firefighters are well taken care of by our command but the local people can use whatever help you can give.”

Camp Fire is deadliest ever in state

Apart from the Woolsey Fire, several other fires are burning in California. The largest, the Camp Fire in Northern California, decimated the city of Paradise and is now deemed the deadliest fire in California’s history, according to the New York Times.

Since Nov. 8, the flames have leveled mountain towns in Butte County. More than 200 people are missing and the death toll has reached 48. As of Wednesday, the fire had burned nearly 211 square miles and was still just 35 percent contained.

Closer to home, the Sierra Fire erupted in Rialto on Tuesday night; San Bernardino County Fire sent 26 engines, seven hand crews and three bulldozers and the Sheriff’s Department assigned a patrol helicopter.

With fast action, the fire was holding a 147 acres and 85 percent containment by Wednesday afternoon with no evacuations needed.

Fire chiefs and weather experts say because of climate change, fast-moving, wide-spread fires are the new normal in California.

Cal Fire suggests that Morongo Basin residents be particularly cautious of space heaters and electrical wiring as the temperatures drop. They advise everyone to have a plan in case they have to evacuate.

The American Red Cross and AT&T are partnering to raise funds for California Wildfire. You can donate money at <https://rdcrss.org/2OBOWIy> or by texting “CAWILDFIRES” to 90999. The Salvation Army is also taking financial donations to aid those affected by the Camp Fire at [gosalarmy.org](https://www.gosalarmy.org).

http://www.hidesertstar.com/news/article_fef763d6-e865-11e8-a6ad-dbb7cecd38f7.html

More Deaths Are Reported In California Fires

Staff Writer, National Public Radio, Inc.

Posted: November 14, 2018, 2:55 pm

Firefighters are making progress against several large fires in California, and they're holding the line against the deadliest wildfire in state history. But officials continue to tally the losses, and emergency crews are still trying to protect people and property from the flames.

The Camp Fire has killed at least 56 people and ravaged entire neighborhoods in Paradise and other Northern California towns.

In the Woolsey Fire to the south, officials announced another death. The total number of fatalities from these two major fires is 59.

Butte County Sheriff Kory Honea said Wednesday night that searchers in the Camp Fire had found an additional 8 sets of remains.

"All eight of those human remains were found in the Paradise area. Six were found inside structures. Two were found outside of structures," he said.

The grim search for human remains in still-smoldering rubble has been aided by the arrival of almost 300 search and rescue personnel, including 50 National Guard troops.

Honea also said teams have been using 22 cadaver dogs to aid the search, and he expects to have a "rapid DNA identification system" in place soon so families can be informed of their relatives' deaths.

Authorities also announced Wednesday night that livestock owners in Butte County may apply for permits to enter evacuated areas to feed animals, but not to stay.

To the south, a new blaze called the Sierra Fire emerged overnight, forcing crews to scramble amid strong Santa Ana winds.

Because of the severity of the Camp Fire, the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection has produced an online structure status map of Paradise and surrounding areas so people can check on the state of their homes without entering areas that are still active fire zones.

Here's where the largest blazes stand, as of Wednesday, according to the latest Cal Fire information.

Camp Fire: There are about 100 names on a list of missing persons that the Butte County Sheriff's Office posted late Wednesday morning local time. By Wednesday evening, the list of missing persons had increased to 130, said Honea. The agency is asking the public to help identify anyone on the list who might have escaped the fire.

The fire that erupted last Thursday near Jarbo Gap in Butte County has burned 138,000 acres and is still 35 percent contained — unchanged from Tuesday. It has also destroyed 8,650 residences. The total number of structures destroyed, including commercial buildings stands at 10,321. Evacuation orders remain in place for a large area east of Chico.

"Last night, firefighters continued to hold established containment lines," Cal Fire says. "Today firefighters will provide structure defense and continue to strengthen and improve existing control lines."

The fire destroyed whole blocks of Paradise, leaving behind charred chimneys and walls standing amid smoldering ashes. As NPR's Kirk Siegler reports via Twitter, "the scale of this one is pretty staggering."

Woolsey Fire: The blaze that hit parts of Ventura and Los Angeles counties is now at 98,362 acres and is 52 percent contained, Cal Fire says. It's estimated to have destroyed 504 structures.

The fire is blamed for killing at least three people — and the death toll could rise.

"The Woolsey Fire is now one of the largest on record to burn in Los Angeles County," reports member station KPCC. The station's news partner, LAist, says some residents forced to flee will be given the OK to go back to their homes.

The Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department announced repopulation for several new areas at 3 p.m., including portions of Calabasas, Westlake Village, Agoura Hills and Malibu.

Cal Fire predicts the fire will be fully contained by Sunday. On Wednesday, the agency said, "Santa Ana winds will diminish through the day with weak onshore winds possible this afternoon along the coast.

Firefighting resources will pursue opportunities to build and improve direct line to minimize further perimeter growth and support containment objectives."

With road closures making it hard to get supplies into Malibu, a group of volunteers organized themselves to "bring supplies from a boat coming from Redondo beach, with donations for residents of Malibu," the Los Angeles Times reported on Tuesday.

Hill Fire: The blaze, one of two to strike in Ventura County the day after last week's mass shooting in Thousand Oaks, is now 96 percent contained. It has charred 4,531 acres.

"Fire crews continue to mop up and patrol the fire perimeter," Cal Fire says. Officials believe the fire, located west of the Woolsey wildfire, will be completely contained on Thursday.

Sierra Fire: The fire that popped up Wednesday night showed how quickly wildfires can develop when they're driven by offshore winds.

Video footage released by the **San Bernardino County Fire** District showed the powerful Santa Ana winds whipping the blaze as a bulldozer was deployed to help limit the fire's spread.

Despite the ferocity of the flames, the fire was not deemed to be a threat to residents, largely because of its direction; officials said an evacuation order was not needed.

How to help

KQED has published a list of ways people can help those who have lost their homes or property in the wildfires, from volunteering to donating money or materials.

Capital Public Radio in Sacramento also has created a list of organizations and relief groups that are working to help victims of the destructive wildfires.

The Camp Fire is expected to exacerbate housing problems in Butte County, where the flames decimated the housing stock.

"There is no housing for them in the county or in the neighborhood or even in California," says Ed Mayer, director of the county's housing authority, in a report by NPR's Eric Westervelt. "So we really have no capacity to absorb a disaster like this."

Reporting from Chico, Eric adds, "Mayer says with a near zero vacancy rate and a housing crisis even before the fire, some displaced people may be forced to leave the state or risk homelessness.

As people have fled the area around Chico and Butte County, volunteers and aid groups have also worked to help animals survive the fires. This week, the North Valley Animal Disaster Group said it was looking after

more than 1,450 animals. The list includes more than 440 cats and 340 dogs, 130 horses, two cows and an alpaca.

The causes of the wildfires in Northern and Southern California are still under investigation. Following reports that two electric utilities reported problems in the locations of the Camp and Woolsey fires minutes before those blazes began, a lawsuit has been filed accusing Pacific Gas & Electric of negligence, according to KQED.

<https://www.npr.org/2018/11/14/667806451/firefighters-corrals-big-california-fires-but-challenges-remain>

EDITORIALS/OPINIONS/LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Remember Ramos' vote on fire tax

Chuck Miller of Yucca Valley, Hi-Desert Star

Posted: November 14, 2018

On Oct. 16, I attended the so-called fire tax hearing in San Bernardino, an all-day event. Fire Chief Hartwig was allowed to speak for well over an hour, two different times, while the taxpayers were allowed three minutes each, period.

During the hearing, Supervisor Ramos would leave his chair many times, and be gone for 10 to 15 minutes each time, then he would return, sit down and yawn there for a while, apparently no caring much what any of the speakers had to say anyway.

Ramos also received earlier this year a very sizable amount of money from the **San Bernardino County firefighters**. Isn't that interesting? Hartwig receives a very hefty salary yearly, at least of \$350,000 and maybe more. When it comes time for Ramos to ask Hartwig questions, it was noted Ramos' questions were very colorful indeed.

The process by which the protest ballots were mailed out is, again, questionable at best. This entire matter should have been put to a vote of the general public (government of the people, by the people and for the people), guaranteed by article 13 of the California Constitution.

We the voters, or someone, need to close the loophole as soon as possible. It should be, without question, a two-thirds majority vote of the people, not the supervisors of San Bernardino County.

At the hearing, when a low-income woman told her plight that if this tax were imposed, she would lose her home, that did not seem to affect Ramos in the least.

As Ramos attains a higher office politically, just remember his "yes" vote to impose this fire tax service zone FP-5 expansion on the people of his district and others.

http://www.hidesertstar.com/opinion/letters_to_editor/article_3d8ac7d2-e85c-11e8-adc1-a3dfa1a8629b.html