



NEWS



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El Dorado fire officials preach evacuations as flames approach Angelus Oaks

Brian Rokos and Richard Atley, The Press-Enterprise

Posted: September 15, 2020



San Bernardino County Fire Chief Dan Munsey, shown in an image from a Facebook video on Sept. 15, 2020, addressed Angelus Oaks residents who have defied evacuation orders during the El Dorado fire. 'I worry about your safety. I won't lie,' he said. (Courtesy of U.S. Forest Service)

Firefighters battling the four-headed enemy of dry brush, high temperatures, steep terrain and scarce resources continued their all-out effort Tuesday, Sept. 15, to stop the El Dorado fire's crawl toward the San Bernardino County Mountains community of Angelus Oaks.

Update: El Dorado fire's 'low-intensity' burn continues to Angelus Oaks, Highway 38

The fire stood at 17,892 acres and was 61% contained Tuesday evening, said Chris Vogel, the incident commander. A red line on a map of the fire showed that there was no containment on the northern flank of the blaze. Tuesday's statistics stack up against the 16,490 acres and 53% containment reported Monday night.

Containment is the percentage of the fire's perimeter that will no longer expand because of firefighters' work or barriers such as roads and bodies of water.

"There's still a significant amount of fire," Vogel said during a virtual town hall meeting streamed on Facebook.

The fire moved a quarter-acre closer to Angelus Oaks on Tuesday, being pushed slowly down the side of Wilshire Peak by light winds out of the southeast and southwest. It was unclear exactly how close the flames were to property. The community straddles Highway 38, and on Tuesday the fire was east of that road that snakes from Mentone to Big Bear.

There is little history of fire in that area, **San Bernardino County Fire** Chief Dan Munsey said, causing the fire to chew through dense vegetation. Burning debris has been rolling downhill and spreading the flames.

Crews have been cutting fire breaks, creating defensible space around homes and even sweeping pine needles off their roofs in an effort to protect those properties — actions that should have been taken by residents months ago, officials said.

The area remains under evacuation orders, and an estimated 3,467 people have fled, but not everyone has left. Munsey said he fears that firefighters will have to shift their attention from putting out the fire to saving lives.

"The residents that are still living there, I worry about your safety. I won't lie. You look and you think it's relatively safe, the fire is up on the hillside. Just understand, that can change in a moment's notice," Munsey

said, snapping his fingers for effect. “We may or may not be able to tell you again when it’s time to evacuate.”

A community member asked about firefighters’ needs. Food? Water? Socks?

“The No. 1 way all of you can support the firefighters is to heed advisories, warnings and evacuations,” Vogel said.

The El Dorado fire was started by a smoke device set off at a gender-reveal photo shoot at a park in Yucaipa on Sept. 5, investigators say.

MAP: Where the El Dorado fire is burning in the San Bernardino Mountains

Vogel said firefighters are trying to turn the fire’s path to the east toward the burn scar from the 2017 Lake fire. Flames have already run into the scars from the 2018 Valley fire and this year’s Apple fire. There is little vegetation to burn in all three areas.

The flames are about 8 miles from Big Bear, Arrowbear and Running Springs, said Big Bear Fire Chief Jeff Willis. He said there are no evacuation warnings or orders in those areas and none are imminent. Officials have discouraged visitors from traveling up the hill in case evacuations become necessary.

Ten injuries and no deaths have been reported in this fire, and four homes have been reported destroyed with two damaged

The damage has been limited despite a lack of resources. The number of large fires burning throughout the West means that none of the incident commanders are getting as much help as they need.

“The demand is to an extent I have not seen before in 30 years of doing this,” said Vogel, who noted that some agencies have held back equipment in case of new fires. “Everything that is available is being called in.

“We just don’t simply have enough of the aircraft, the bulldozers and the firefighters,” Munsey said.

There were 1,319 personnel working to extinguish the El Dorado fire.

Evacuation orders remain in effect for Angelus Oaks, Mountain Home Village, Forest Falls, 7 Oaks and the Barton Flats/Jenks Lake area. The San Bernardino National Forest is closed until further notice. Highway 38 remained closed from Bryant Street to Onyx Summit.

<https://www.sbsun.com/2020/09/15/el-dorado-fire-grows-more-than-3000-acres-in-24-hours-after-flareup-near-angelus-oaks/>

Crews work to protect Mt. Wilson from Bobcat Fire; El Dorado Fire 61% contained

Rebecca Plevin and Christopher Damien, Palm Springs Desert Sun

Posted: September 15, 2020



Fire crews worked all day Tuesday to keep the Bobcat Fire from reaching Mount Wilson and the historic mountain-top observatory in Pasadena.

As of Tuesday afternoon, the blaze was just hundreds of feet from the Mt. Wilson Observatory, which is home to 60-inch and 100-inch telescopes, about 12 miles northeast of Pasadena, fire officials said.

"The Bobcat Fire is within 500 feet of the Mt. Wilson Observatory & crews are in place ready to receive the fire," officials with the Angeles National Forest tweeted around 12:30 p.m. "Strategic firing is taking place in the south where air operations are strengthening dozerlines."

By Tuesday evening, the Angeles National Forest announced in a video posted to Twitter that firefighters have made progress in their defense of Mt. Wilson.

Planning Ops Trainee Kerri Gilliland said in the video that the area was looking "really good" and that firefighters should "have resources in there throughout the night."

A "secondary priority" of those fighting the blaze is to keep the flames to the south of Highway 2, which runs through the San Gabriels to the end of the Victor Valley in the Mojave Desert, fire officials said.

The fire, which started Sept. 6 in the national forest, had charred 41,231 acres as of 8 a.m. Tuesday and was 3% contained.

On Monday, the observatory tweeted that the fire was "knocking on our door." By Tuesday morning, it posted a photo of a red sun rising over smoke.

"The observatory boundaries are still secure at this time and we have 12 companies of professionals from [the Los Angeles County Fire Department] intending to keep it that way," Tuesday's tweet read. "It's shaping up to be a good day for aerial action, too."

Tuesday afternoon, observatory administrators added a post expressing their gratitude to those who are protecting the area.

"We give our sincerest thanks to the firefighters who are on the ground defending our observatory as well as the pilots flying aircraft for fire suppression," the observatory tweeted.

Evacuation orders remain in effect for residents in portions of Arcadia and Sierra Madre. Also, evacuation orders are in place for the foothill communities of Monrovia, Bradbury, Sierra Madre, Altadena, Duarte and Pasadena.

The El Dorado Fire in San Bernardino County has grown to 17,892 acres and is 61% contained as of Tuesday evening, according to San Bernardino National Forest officials.

Eleven people have been injured in the fire, officials said. Four residences have been destroyed and two have been damaged, they said. Six other structures have been destroyed and four damaged.

The fire remains "very dynamic," officials said in a statement.

They said the fire slowly burned downslope towards the Angelus Oaks community overnight and crews are "poised and ready" to attack the fire around the unincorporated community. They urged all Angelus Oaks residents to evacuate immediately.

Fire officials said during a community townhall streamed on Facebook Tuesday night that firefighters are working to keep the fire from continuing to move north and jumping Highway 38. If that happens, **San Bernardino County Fire** Chief Dan Munsey said, Big Bear residents will likely receive an evacuation warning.

"We are working really hard to keep this fire from moving north and stopping it at Highway 38," Munsey said.

Instead, firefighters are attempting to direct the blaze east toward the fire scar of the Lake Fire, a 30,000-acre fire that burned in 2015, where there is less fuel to burn.

Evacuation orders also remain in effect for the communities of Mountain Home Village, Forest Falls and Seven Oaks.

The South Coast Air Quality Management District has issued smoke advisories for the Bobcat and El Dorado fires through Tuesday.

<https://www.desertsun.com/story/news/environment/wildfires/2020/09/15/bobcat-fire-crews-protect-mt-wilson-el-dorado-fire-54-contained/5804014002/>

This Is How Wildfires, Climate Change and Affordable Housing Are All Linked

Megan Jamerson, KVCR News

Posted: September 15, 2020



CREDIT TWITTER/SAN BERNARDINO COUNTY FIRE DEPARTMENT

This fire season has revealed the reality that more people are choosing to live in fire prone areas in California—raising the stakes of the worsening wildfire season. KVCR’s Megan Jamerson spoke with a University of Redlands associate professor of economics who says affordable housing is not only an essential solution for fighting wildfires but for addressing climate change.

Imagine a world in which California is a leader in affordable housing. Housing is more-dense, people live closer to work and schools and commute times fall. This means public transportation becomes more robust and efficient because people are more centrally located. Car use drops along with greenhouse gas emissions.

“It’s a really important part of reducing emissions,” said Dr. Nicholas Reksten, an environmental economist at the University of Redlands. “At the same time, it would help reduce pressure on people to settle in what scholars call the wildland urban interface. So, these areas that where people live but where wildfires can also happen.”

These areas on the edge of grasslands, in forests and mountains are where the state’s fires are currently raging and racking up the costs. From the cost of fighting the fires themselves to the loss of human life, homes, work hours and the long-term cost of smoke exposure on health.

Climate science shows without action, emissions will continue to raise temperatures, worsen droughts that provide fuel for wildfires and extend the fire season. Reksten says California has aggressive climate action goals when it come to reducing energy grid emissions but it has not done as well when it comes to its biggest emissions offender—transportation.

“In terms of a cost benefit analysis there is zero question,” said Reksten. “I mean it is absolutely clear that on net, it makes sense to take extremely aggressive action against further climate change to mitigate these wildfires. That is like absolutely clear overall.”

With any policy he says there are economic winners and losers. Everyone wins if climate outcomes improve. But more specifically, affordable housing policy is great for developers who stand to make a lot of money if cities change laws around housing development. The losers, homeowners, are also very politically powerful.

“There’s a correct perception that building more homes would eventually mean that your home value would fall,” said Reksten.

This means a loss of assets and less economic flexibility for Southern California’s suburban homeowners. But cheaper prices also makes housing more affordable for people who have been historically priced out of

ownership. This leads to the secondary issue which is often coded as “preserving neighborhood character” but is related to racial discrimination against Black and brown people.

“There’s anxiety about affordable policies bringing more people who aren’t white into white communities,” said Reksten.

He says there is a strange dichotomy where people who consider themselves progressive, that vote in favor of action on climate change, do not vote for affordable housing. And if people do not start making the link between affordable housing and action on climate, the economic costs for everyone will continue to rise.

<https://www.kvcrnews.org/post/how-wildfires-climate-change-and-affordable-housing-are-all-linked#stream/0>

"Fight on Cory Norton"

Lodd.iaff.org

Posted: September 15, 2020



It is with deepest regret and sorrow to report the line-of-duty death of Driver/Engineer Cory Norton, IAFF 10th District Local 935, San Bernardino County CA. Brother Norton, 33, passed away on September 15, 2020 from occupational cancer.

Services are pending.

Expressions of sympathy or condolences for the Local or the family can be sent to IAFF Local 935, P.O. Box 1302, Fontana, CA 92334-1302

The story of Cory Norton, a **San Bernardino County Fire Fighter** diagnosed with a rare form of cancer. Cory was born in raised in Big Bear. Cory always wanted to give back and raise money for research on Epithelioid Sarcoma. He was in his fifth year of fighting this beast, and continued to fight.

Unfortunately Cory passed away this morning surrounded by his family. His family continues to rely on prayer and support that he has so humbly received over the years and they remain forever grateful. It has carried them through the hardest of times and treatments.

Tonight September 15th Cory will be brought home to Big Bear where he was born and raised and where his wife Tawni continues to raise their children. We ask that the community come out and line the streets to support our local hero. Please come out tonight around 830 give or take depending on traffic for the procession from Big Bear Dam to Division on Big Bear Blvd and show your support. Make signs and bring your flags.

There are a few families that have been touched by this rare and horrid cancer, and unfortunately, for any rare sarcoma there have been only 6 drugs approved for rare cancers since 1978. Many see this as unacceptable. There are so many that have received this diagnosis, and yet..... Minimal research has happened. CC-TDI is an amazing lab in Portland Oregon whose mission is to make all children's cancers survivable. The family has started a group, who together, have dedicated their time, lives and energy in making a difference.

If you are one who have been touched by or diagnosed with Epithelioid Sarcoma and would like to get involved, we welcome you to join in supporting research. For those of you who wish to make a difference for so many through prayer or financial support for more research, we humbly ask you to do just that, if it is put on your heart to do so.

Cory Norton 9-20-1986 to 9-15-2020

<https://lodd.iaff.org/LODDProfile?ID=1194390>

Man Killed In Rollover Crash In San Bernardino On Southbound 215

Staff Writer, Pain In the Pass Info

Posted: September 15, 2020



SAN BERNARDINO, CA. (Pain In The Pass) >> A fatal crash sending one vehicle to roll-over on southbound Interstate 215 in San Bernardino Monday night.

The crash was reported at 7:55pm on Monday September 14, 2020. On southbound Interstate 215 between Palm Ave./Kendall Dr. and University Pkwy.

California Highway Patrol, and **San Bernardino County Fire** Department responded to the roll-over incident. The blue Lexus was reported to be speeding, weaving in-and-out of lanes and then lost control hitting the guardrail. This caused the vehicle to roll-over multiple times into the center divider.

From the CHP traffic log, one person was ejected from the blue Lexus. The driver landing in the left shoulder of the freeway close to the fast lane and not moving.

When CHP and firefighters arrived on the scene, they found the victim unresponsive. Shortly after they pronounced the driver deceased at the scene.

They had to temporarily block all lanes as they worked on the investigation. The slow lane was reopened after about a half of hour. Lanes were reopened after 10pm.

The Lexus damaged about 80 to 100 feet of the center divider guardrail.

This accident is currently under investigation by the California Highway Patrol San Bernardino Inland Office. Anyone with information regarding the accident is asked to call (909) 383-4247.

<https://paininthepass.info/2020/09/15/man-killed-in-rollover-crash-in-san-bernardino-on-southbound-215/>

El Dorado Fire Tuesday update: 17,598 acres and 54% containment

Staff Writer, News Mirror

Posted: September 15, 2020



A bucket helicopter refills its water supply at the Crafton Hills reservoir.

The El Dorado Fire has burned 17,598 acres and is 54% contained, as of Tuesday, Sept. 15.

The El Dorado Fire remains very dynamic as the terrain driven fire aligns with the predominant wind influences in the area. Fire activity slowly burned down slope towards the Angeles Oaks community overnight allowing fire resources the opportunity to secure indirect and direct handlines in preparation for active fire potential today.

Firefighters are poised and ready to conduct firing operations around Angeles Oaks if needed. Fire crews are in position to directly attack the fire with both hand lines and hose lines.

Predicted winds have changed over the fire today with a southwest wind influence at 8 to 10 mph gusting to 20 mph over 6,000 feet elevation. The weather remains dry and hot and the fire will align with topography and burn actively upslope towards the San Bernardino Peak (northeast) towards the Lake Fire scar.

There is NO evacuation directive for Big Bear residents AT THIS TIME. Please monitor official sources for any changes including the San Bernardino National Forest information listed at the top of this update, San Bernardino Sheriff's Department, the CAL Fire San Bernardino Unit and **San Bernardino County Fire**.

Along Hwy 38, the fire activity continues to slowly back down the slope and burn eastward along Mill Creek. The fire line behind Forest Falls continues to hold and firefighters continue to work in and around this community. Fire crews continue working to secure the fire line along Mill Creek from Vivian Creek to last month's Apple Fire scar.

Residents of Mountain Home, we continue to ask for your patience. Our work in and around your community is not complete yet. Power lines are still down and we ask that you stay away from your homes for a little longer.

WEATHER:The weather will remain hot and dry. Predictive Services division of the Southern California Geographic Area Coordination Center has issued a fuels advisory for excessively dry fuels throughout California due to drought conditions and hot temperatures.

https://www.newsmirror.net/news/el-dorado-fire-tuesday-update-17-598-acres-and-54-containment/article_3acb6880-f773-11ea-813f-3bd2959116d9.html