

(323) 881-2401

September 4, 2002

TO: EACH SUPERVISOR
FROM: P. MICHAEL FREEMAN

UPDATE ON THREE FIRES

This memorandum is to provide information on the three fires that have occurred since Sunday, September 1, 2002.

CURVE FIRE

The Curve Fire began on Sunday, September 1, 2002, at 12:35 a.m. on San Gabriel Canyon Road, 30 miles north of Azusa. Currently, the Curve Fire has consumed over 15,800 acres, with 69 structures lost (most were seasonal-use cabins or outbuildings). Over 1,500 personnel are currently committed to this fire under the command of the Angeles National Forest. The Los Angeles County Fire Department is providing assistance as a forest service cooperating agency.

Over 200 structures, the San Gabriel Watershed of the North Fork, and the Sheep Mountain Wilderness are currently threatened. Evacuations were ordered at the Coldbrook Campground, Crystal Lake Campground, and along East Fork Road.

To date, two minor injuries have been reported. The fire is 15% contained and Los Angeles County Fire Department resources will remain on this incident for structure protection.

FREEWAY FIRE

Also occurring on September 1, 2002, was the Freeway Fire, which started at 2:30 p.m. along the northbound 5 Freeway, five miles north of Lake Hughes Road in the Castaic area. This fire consumed 1,043 acres, with no structures or outbuildings being lost. Over 1,000 personnel were committed to this fire under the command of the Los Angeles County Fire Department Incident Management Team, with assistance being provided from fire agencies throughout the Southern California area.

Four minor injuries were reported. One of our Camp Foremen experienced chest pains and was transported to Henry Mayo Hospital where he is under observation.

As of 6:00 p.m. yesterday, the fire was 100% contained. Most resources have been released, with the exception of fire investigators and patrols for monitoring.

LEONA FIRE

The Leona Fire began on Tuesday, September 3, 2002, at 1:24 p.m. at Bouquet Canyon Road and Elizabeth Lake Road in Leona Valley. Currently, it has consumed 4,470 acres. A preliminary report shows as many as four homes and two outbuildings lost; we will conduct a follow-up damage assessment today. The structures lost were located in the Angeles National Forest area and were involved in the early stage of the fire. One hundred homes have been evacuated, and 250 residents are being sheltered at the Highland High School in Palmdale.

Over 750 fire fighters are committed to this fire, including one Los Angeles County Engine Strike Team (five engines and one Battalion Chief) and nine Strike Teams from the Region. Command of this incident is unified between the U.S. Forest Service (USFS) and Los Angeles County, with some State responsibility area land involved. Equipment and personnel assigned to the fire include 76 engines, 17 hand crews, 4 dozers, 1 water tender, 8 air tankers and 2 SuperScoopers.

Other fire agencies assisting in this effort are Los Angeles City, Verdugo Dispatch, Long Beach and Kern County Fire Departments and the California Department of Forestry. Also at the scene are members of the Governor's Office of Emergency Services, Los Angeles County Department of Animal Care and

Control, Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department and California Highway Patrol.

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To date, one injury has been reported. A USFS fire fighter suffered from heat exhaustion and he was treated and released.

The fire is 40% contained. Progressive fire control will be the objective throughout the day. Our primary concern is erratic local winds and possible weather changes.

In response to these incidents, the Emergency Coordination Center was activated to assume responsibilities as the Region I Coordinator.

Arrangements have been made to ensure that we are available to handle other incidents as they occur. We will provide a follow-up report tomorrow or as conditions warrant.

PMF:pv

c: David Janssen
Louisa Ollague
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Matt Knabe
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