



East Slide Rock Ridge Fire Update

Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forest

Tuesday, August 26, 2008, 8:00 AM

On the Web at: www.fs.fed.us/r4/htnf or <http://www.inciweb.org>
Info Center (775) 748-4141 -- Hours of Operation: 7:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.

By The Numbers

Acres: 38,500

Personnel: 476

Type 1 Hotshot Crews: 6

Type 2 Crews: 6

Helicopters: 5

Engines: 10

Dozers: 3

Water Tenders: 8

(Elko, NV) -- Weather predictions for "Red Flag" conditions were validated Monday as the passage of an anticipated dry cold front produced gusty winds, high temperatures, and low humidity levels that had a dramatic effect on fire behavior. "By mid-afternoon we had to direct firefighters to disengage from suppression actions and move to safety zones as the fire outflanked them," said Incident Commander Paul Summerfelt. "We just couldn't risk having our firefighters becoming entrapped." Aircraft were also grounded due to smoky conditions and high winds.

The fire made a strong push northward along Robinson's Creek up to Cougar Point. By late afternoon it was approximately five miles south of Murphy Hot Springs. The fire also continued to move north along Sawmill Ridge but did not move westward over the ridge. The active fire is now well north and east of Jarbidge, however, the Owyhee County Sheriff's Department has issued a pre-evacuation advisory to residents of Murphy Hot Springs. Firefighters did complete some fire breaks, or holding lines, south of the community and some engines are on-site to provide structure protection.

Firefighters also curtailed structure protection efforts underway at the Pole Creek Guard Station when it appeared the fire might compromise the road and their ability to leave. They were able to apply protective "foam" on the structure before pulling out. Firefighters working on the northeast side observed fire backing downslope against the wind.

Fire managers expect that Tuesday will be another active fire day. Though the winds expected to be lighter, portions of the fire are burning through sagebrush and grass where even light winds will cause fire to move quickly. As soon as conditions allow, fire resources will re-engage in suppression actions and fire managers will work to determine the fire's exact location.

Two SEATs (single engine air tankers) from Idaho are now staged at Jackpot and will be available for use along with five helicopters, two SEATs, and three air attack planes currently assigned to the fire. Jackpot will serve as a reload site for the SEATs.

The safety of firefighters and the public remains the top priority. An area closure established for public safety remains in effect. A description of the closure area and fire information may be found on the Humboldt-Toiyabe website at <http://www.fs.fed.us/r4/htnf>.

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