

Fire update: Fires show growth over the weekend

Contributed by Elizabeth Larson
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NORTH COAST – After several days of little or no increases in acreage, Mendocino County's lightning fires were reported to have burned a few thousand more acres by Saturday, with firefighters continuing to slowly gain ground on those fires as well as those in the Mendocino National Forest.

The Mendocino Lightning Complex has burned 41,200 acres, led to the death of a volunteer firefighter, destroyed two homes and injured 24, according to Cal Fire statistics.

After two weeks of firefighting the complex is 40-percent contained, and more personnel continue to arrive, Cal Fire reported. On Saturday a total of 1,749 firefighters were on scene.

Adding that complex to the Walker Fire, 55,700 acres have burned across Mendocino and Lake counties in recent weeks, which doesn't count more than 12,000 more that have burned on the Mendocino National Forest.

On the forest's Upper Lake Ranger District, three of the four fires in the Soda Complex remained active Saturday, with the 2,190-acre Big Fire close to containment, while the Mill and the Monkey Rock fires continue to steadily burn, forest officials reported.

The Soda Complex is 73-percent contained, with 476 personnel assigned to it. Mop up and rehabilitation already is under way in some areas.

On the Yolla Bolly Complex – which is in the Yolla Bolly-Middle Eel Wilderness in Mendocino, Trinity and Tehama counties – backfires began Saturday to control that series of fires, which has blackened 7,122 acres and is 20-percent contained. Approximately 197 firefighter are assigned to that complex, which officials reported has cost more than \$1 million to fight to date.

For more information visit the Forest Service Web site at www.fs.fed.us/r5/mendocino/currentconditions or Cal Fire at www.cdf.ca.gov.

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