

Local firefighters fight Colorado blaze, meet president

By Edward Ortiz, Sacramento Bee

It isn't every day you get to fight the nation's largest fire and meet the president.

That's what happened to Placerville resident and firefighter Matt McKurtis and other members of the Eldorado National Forest and Lake Tahoe Basin firefighting units of the U.S. Forest Service, who are working the fire line at the Waldo Canyon fire in Colorado.

The meeting with the president was captured in a photograph that ran on Saturday's front page of The Bee. The firefighters in the photo were not identified, but their Forest Service colleagues back home recognized them immediately.

"We knew that our firefighters had met the president so we were keeping an eye out to see if the photo would appear anywhere," said Beth Brady, a Forest Service fire prevention specialist at Lake Tahoe.

The Northern California units were involved, with many others, in saving several homes in the Colorado Springs area.

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