

Burned bear cub making progress at LTWC

By Associated Press

A black-bear cub burned in a devastating Washington state wildfire is making a slow recovery at Lake Tahoe Wildlife Care.

The cub, named Cinder, still has third-degree burns on her paws that require new bandages every other day, and she's still on pain medications and antibiotics, the *Wenatchee World* reported

But Denise Upton, a caretaker at Lake Tahoe Wildlife Care, says the cub has a good appetite and has been enjoying fresh fruit and trout brought in by local fishermen.

"She's a good patient," Upton said. "She's eating everything we put in there."

Methow resident Steve Love discovered the 37-pound bear under a horse trailer in his yard in north-central Washington's Methow Valley, where the largest fire in recorded state history burned about 400 square miles and destroyed 300 homes. The fire had swept past his house two weeks earlier, and the bear was so badly burned on her paws she was walking on her elbows.

A Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife officer captured her, and a volunteer pilot flew Cinder to California on Aug. 4.

Upton said it's too soon to know whether Cinder can be returned to the wild. The bear lost some of her claws, which could make it difficult.

Lake Tahoe Wildlife Care successfully rehabilitated one other

bear cub after a wildfire in 2009 and released him back to the wild, she said. They know from his radio tracker that he survived at least a year, until the batteries in the tracking device died.

Upton said Cinder doesn't like people.

"And that's a good thing," she said. "I think she's going to be a perfect candidate, once she heals."