

5th firefighter hurt in King Fire



Updated 8:35pm:

One of the more than 7,000 firefighters working the King Fire had to be airlifted out of the area on Sept. 24.

KXTV is reporting the inmate firefighter was taken to Sutter Roseville Medical Center with unknown injuries after being hit by a tree limb while working the fire line. This is the fifth person injured in the massive fire burning east of Pollock Pines.

There has been no reported change to the acreage or containment numbers. They stand at 92,960 acres and 38 percent.

People in Swansboro have been allowed to return home.

A system is moving into the region on Thursday which could bring moisture. It will also bring cooler temps and higher humidity – good firefighting conditions.

Squaw Valley has canceled the Sept. 27 Oktoberfest because of

the air quality.

Athletes participating in the Sept. 28 Tahoe Bike Classic have voted to stick with that date and gamble that the smoke will not be an issue. A final decision will be made that morning.

Thousands of structures are still at risk. To date, 12 houses have been lost in what is currently the largest wildfire burning in California. The fire was started Sept. 13 by an alleged arsonist. It has been burning east of Pollock Pines in the Eldorado and Tahoe national forests.

On Sept. 23 pilot Gary Dahlen was honored by the U.S. Forest Service for his quick actions to rescue a hand crew and dozer operator that were overrun by fire last week. Dahlen flew to a lower level to direct the hand crew and dozer operator down a road. He and another helicopter pilot landed in an open space and whisked the firefighters to safety.

Otter Creek Elementary School will remain closed until evacuations of the immediate areas are lifted; those students continue to attend classes at Georgetown School.

The Tahoe National Forest has established a call center (530.587.9096) from 7am-7pm at the Truckee Ranger District Office to provide residents of Truckee and Lake Tahoe Basin with information.

There is no fire threat to these areas. Smoke will continue to be a concern, with the impacted areas dependent on wind direction.

The King Fire area closure in effect for the Eldorado National Forest has been revised to remove the statement, "Owners of lessees of land in the area are exempt of this prohibition to the extent necessary to gain access to their land."

Popular sites included in the closure include: the west side of Desolation Wilderness on the Eldorado National Forest, the

Crystal Basin area, including areas accessed by Ice House Road, the Wrights Lake area, Hell Hole area, Stumpy Meadows and Dru Barner campground.

– *Lake Tahoe News staff report*