

Crews use sensors, cameras to track fire's behavior



Equipment used by the Fire Behavior Assessment Team.
Photo/U.S. Forest Service

By Rory Appleton, Fresno Bee

A special firefighting team with the Sierra National Forest hiked into the mouth of the 56,900-acre Rough Fire on Thursday to drop special equipment in the blaze's path, and data recorded by the equipment may help prevent future wildfires.

Rough Fire public information officer Shawn Lenske hiked alongside the 10-man Fire Behavior Assessment Team as the firefighters made their way to within a mile of the wildfire, which is now the second largest currently burning in California. The team placed sensors that monitor temperature and wind conditions as well as GoPro cameras at several locations in the Rough Fire's path.

Lenske, who also works as a firefighter in Los Angeles, said the team members dropped one set of sensors and cameras in an area that had recently burned and another in an area that has never burned.

Firefighters hope to learn just how effective proscribed burns

and brush clearing are in slowing the path of a large wildfire and use that information to adjust recommended preventive measures for community members in areas at risk of fire.

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