



COUNTY EXECUTIVE OFFICE

105 E. Anapamu St. • Santa Barbara, CA 93101
(805) 568-3400 • FAX (805) 568-3414

www.countyofsb.org

Facebook.com/countyofsb

Twitter: @countyofsb

P R E S S R E L E A S E

News Media Contact:

Joint Information Center
(805) 696-1188

Friday, June 17, 2016

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: 11 a.m.

Sherpa Fire Update: June 17, 11 a.m. Press Conference

(Santa Barbara, CA) – A press conference to provide an update on the Sherpa Fire will be held at 11 a.m. on Friday, June 17, 2016 at Dos Pueblos High School, 7266 Alameda Avenue, 93117.

Third District Supervisor Doreen Farr will join County Fire Chief Eric Peterson, County Sheriff Bill Brown and Representatives of US Forest Service, CAL FIRE, California Highway Patrol, California State Parks, and Santa Barbara County Public Health/Animal Services will be present.

Public and firefighter safety and preservation of structures and infrastructure continues to be the top priority. All available resources continue to be dedicated to fighting the fire and providing the public with accurate information in a timely manner. Multiple agencies are involved in the fire response under unified command.

Fire crews stayed busy last night due to extreme downhill runs from the down-slope Sundowner winds. Today firefighters will continue to work on building and reinforcing containment lines along the North and East sides of the fire, and along Highway 101.

Ground crews are being supported by helicopters and air tankers. Crews will also be initiating contingency lines.

Fire activity along Highway 101 is under continuous evaluation by fire managers and the California Highway Patrol. The highway and rail line may be closed again if the fire is determined to be a hazard.

Gusty sundowner winds are expected each afternoon through early morning this weekend - possibly peaking in intensity Saturday evening. Relative humidity is expected to remain mild - generally above 30 percent during the late afternoon, with good overnight recoveries in the early evening hours through Saturday night. Significantly hotter and drier conditions are expected beginning Sunday. Wind presents the biggest challenge to fighting the fire, as well as extreme heat predicted this weekend.

SHERPA FIRE UPDATE

FACTS

- On Wednesday, June 15, 2016, a fire started off of Refugio Road at approximately 3:15 p.m.
- The fire is under unified command of U.S. Forest Service, CAL FIRE and Santa Barbara County Fire
- Unified command center is active at Dos Pueblos High School (no public access). The County Emergency Operations Center is also active.
- As of Friday morning, the wind-driven fire had consumed approximately 4,000 acres, up from 1,200 acres total burned as of Thursday night.
- The fire is presently at 5% containment.
- 270 structures are under 72 hour threat.
- One out building has burned.
- 1,230 personnel are devoted to the incident.
- No injuries have been reported.
- Resources from throughout California are on the firelines fighting the Sherpa Fire. Local fire engines and personnel from Santa Maria, Lompoc, Santa Barbara City, Montecito, and Carpinteria/Summerland fire departments are fighting the fire as well as units from surrounding counties.

Summary

ROAD CLOSURES

Highway 101 was closed overnight at Winchester Canyon Road (northbound) and at Highway 246 (southbound) and was re-opened in both directions this morning. However, this is subject to change on little or no notice, dependent upon fire conditions. Rail service was also closed overnight but has resumed. Cathedral Oaks Road is temporarily closed from Glen Annie to Alameda.

EVACUATION: MANDATORY AND WARNINGS

Mandatory Evacuation orders have been made for Refugio Canyon, Venadito Canyon, Flores Canyon, Ocean Mesa, El Capitan Campground, El Capitan State Park, and Refugio State Park. Warning of Evacuation orders have been made for the areas between El Capitan and Eagle Road, including Farren Road. If you feel threatened, do not wait for an evacuation order – leave immediately.

SHELTERS

An evacuation center is open at the Wake Center, located at 300 N. Turnpike Road in Santa Barbara. Currently 9 people are staying at the shelter. Wake Center will remain open until evacuations are lifted. Shelters are also on standby at the Goleta Valley Community Center, 5679 Hollister Ave., Goleta and Santa Ynez Union High School, located at 2975 E. Hwy 246 in Santa Ynez, and will be opened if needed.

ANIMALS

Anyone in the evacuation area that needs assistance with animals should call (805) 681-4332. Sheltering for large animals has been provided at Earl Warren Showgrounds upon owner's request. Assistance was provided to Circle Bar B Ranch, and roughly 83

SHERPA FIRE UPDATE

horses were evacuated to Earl Warren Showgrounds - 15 more are currently on standby. Kennels were provided so small animals could remain with their owners.

RESIDENTS

Residents should monitor the status of the fire, and heed any guidance made available on the County of Santa Barbara website at www.countyofsb.org and/or www.awareandprepare.org. Residents may contact the public information center by dialing 211. It is also recommended that residents follow any guidance provided by their employer. In addition, residents should take into consideration that additional travel time may be needed. If you feel threatened, do not wait for an evacuation order – leave immediately.

The communities surrounding the Sherpa Fire can expect to see smoke throughout the day, which will increase during the evening hours. Outdoor activities should be planned for times when smoke levels are low. Upslope winds occur during the day, which will often take smoke into higher elevations. In the evening these winds change direction and bring smoke back downslope. For more information about smoke impacts please visit the Santa Barbara County Air Pollution Control District at www.OurAir.org.

MEDIA ONLY

Joint Information Center	805-696-1188
Hashtag	#SherpaFire

County of Santa Barbara, Fire, Sheriff, Office of Emergency Management and Public Health have posted information on their social media including Twitter, Facebook and Nixle.

#