Sherpa Fire Officials Transition from Fire Containment to Control

(SANTA BARBARA, Calif.) - With the Sherpa Fire moving toward containment, fire managers are shifting focus to fire control measures.

The focus during the incident has been containment, which means securing a line around the entire burn area. The fire continues to burn within this boundary but is unlikely to spread beyond the containment line or fire line. Unburned dry brush, grass and other fuels in this fire perimeter can potentially flare up and burn for several weeks.

Once fully contained, firefighters work on controlling the fire area by battling it inside the containment line. Ground and aerial crews shift to finding and extinguishing ‘hot spots’ that can erupt suddenly and be pushed by winds outside of containment lines. Smoke may be visible during this time. Handcrews concentrate on digging out roots and turning the soil over to eliminate smoldering embers in the ground. Controlled fire has a low risk of expanding beyond the fire line.

Fire crews are closely monitoring wind patterns and utilizing an infrared-equipped aircraft to identify hot spots and other problem areas. Crews will continue working until incident commanders are confident that the fire cannot be rekindled.

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