



North Tahoe and Meeks Bay Fire Protection Districts



Michael S. Schwartz - Fire Chief

PO Box 5879
222 Fairway Dr.
Tahoe City, CA 96145

Steve Simons - Fire Chief

Main: 530-583-6911
Fax: 530-583-6909
Meeks Bay Main: 530-525-7548

Erin Holland - Public Information Officer - North Tahoe Fire – holland@ntfire.net - 530-308-1158

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: RED FLAG DECLARATION PROMPTS ACTIVATION OF LOCAL STRIKE TEAM

TAHOE CITY, CA, Sept. 12, 2018 – For the second time this fire season, the Lake Tahoe Basin Operational Area has received state funding to activate and pre-position a task force during high fire weather in the region.

North Tahoe Strike Team Leader Alan Whisler and a strike team comprised of members from North Tahoe Fire, Meeks Bay Fire, Squaw Valley Fire, Northstar Fire, and Fallen Leaf Lake Fire Departments assembled five brush engines at Squaw Valley Tuesday morning for a team briefing and assignment review. These additional resources were activated to ensure a quick response while the Basin is under Red Flag weather conditions, which create high fire danger. In addition to the benefit of having additional resources staffed during this dangerous time, the crews staffing the strike team are local and familiar with the areas facing the highest risk. Crews will patrol areas from the south shore of Lake Tahoe to Truckee, CA for the duration of the Red Flag Warning, scheduled to end Thursday morning. Truckee Fire is providing logistical support to the strike team.

Chief Allen Riley of Squaw Valley Fire prepared and submitted the funding request through California's Mutual Aid System, which is committed to ensuring neighbor-helping-neighbor resources are available when disaster strikes. The Budget Act of 2018 provides \$25,000,000 to support activities directly related to regional response and readiness. SB 901 provided that these activities include pre-deployment of government resources that are part of the California Fire and Rescue Mutual Aid System upon the authority and approval of the California Office of Emergency Services to meet the requirements for state resources called up for pre-disaster and disaster response.

The Lake Tahoe Basin's forests have an extraordinary amount of fuel and some of the highest ignition rates in the Sierra Nevada, calling for additional restrictions imposed during Red Flag Conditions. During Red Flag warning days, a declaration by the Fire Chief can be enforced, prohibiting all burning of solid fuels during that time period. (Local ordinance 307.1.2). The USFS also prohibits the cutting of wood, and other industrial activities such as welding and grinding in such conditions.

While charcoal BBQs are allowed in most jurisdictions, extreme caution should be exercised when using them around combustible materials, on wood decks and when disposing of the ashes. Always follow the manufacturer's recommended instructions and clearances. For additional information on how to prevent wildfires, visit www.ReadyForWildfire.org.

####