

## **Blue Fire burning through 400 acres in the Sierra National Forest**

By Omar Shaikh Rashad

San Francisco Chronicle, Wednesday, June 30, 2021

A day-old wildfire, known as the Blue Fire, has been burning through a southwest portion of the Sierra National Forest near the Bretz Mill campgrounds in Fresno County.

About 100 fire personnel were responding to the 400-acre blaze. The cause of the fire was still unknown as of Wednesday noon.

So far, 10% of the fire was contained, according to the latest information on the fire posted by forest officials. There were no imminent threats to any structures or buildings.

The Blue Fire was moving northwest Wednesday morning, toward the burn scar left behind by last year's Creek Fire.

Evacuation orders were issued to two homeowners so far, who have both refused to leave, said Tony Botti, a spokesperson for the Fresno County Sheriff's Office.

Evacuation warnings for nearby communities are also in effect, including those in and near the Shaver Lake area, Botti said.

Even though the Creek Fire burned through nearly 380,000 acres of Fresno and Madera counties, many unaffected residents who evacuated complained about having to take precautions this year, Botti said. As a result, he's concerned with residents not taking evacuation orders seriously.

"The last thing I want is for people to not heed our warnings," Botti said.

## **Blue Fire update: Shaver Lake safe for now, Forest Service says; evacuations in place**

By Jim Guy and Joshua Tehee

Merced Sun-Star, Wednesday, June 30, 2021

Forest Service commanders Wednesday ordered 100 more fire personnel into the battle against the Blue Fire burning south of Shaver Lake, in a "full suppression response."

The fire, which erupted Tuesday afternoon, forced evacuations for residents along Road 10S02, (Peterson Mill) to Nutmeg Saddle. That includes Bretz Mill Camp. The Fresno County Sheriff's Office released an online live fire map Wednesday morning, where residents in the area can find the latest evacuation orders and warnings.

The Blue Fire has burned about 400 acres as of 7:30 a.m. Wednesday and was 10% contained, according to the National Forest Service. At 2 p.m., the fire remained at 400 acres and containment was up to 25%. The blaze was burning in a northwest direction, toward a ridge line at Soaproot Saddle and an area burned by the 2020 Creek Fire, the largest single fire event in California history.

Shaver Lake is not under threat, because of the distance and location of the fire, said Alex Olow, with the National Forest Service incident command. Two structures are under threat, Olow said.

Additional crews have been requested, including three strike teams, with engines, three type 1 hand crews and an additional helicopter.

The fire is burning in timber and short grass and officials are hopeful that a fire break created by forest workers will aid in slowing the fire's progress. Crews on Wednesday will continue to build fire lines with bulldozers and hand crews, with air support.

Cal Fire is assisting the forest service in the battle.

The fire was being closely watched after the devastating Creek Fire.

Said Assemblyman Jim Patterson on Tuesday night: "It will be a long night for our friends and families living near Blue Canyon. Please keep them, and all the fire crews working to stop this fire, in your prayers tonight."

### **Shell Fire containment improves to 65 percent**

The Bakersfield Californian, Monday, June 29, 2021

Fire crews have achieved 65 percent containment of the Shell Fire burning since Sunday afternoon near the Grapevine, the Kern County Fire Department reported Tuesday.

A morning tweet from the agency said the fire has burned 1,984 acres — the same figure released at midday Monday, when containment was estimated at 30 percent.

The blaze on the east side of Interstate 5 has drawn the cooperation of various local, state and federal agencies since it was sparked by a vehicle fire reported at 1 p.m. Sunday.

No residences have been reported threatened but a vacant elementary school and infrastructure such as power lines and cellphone towers were named as being at risk.

The San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District on Monday warned local residents that the fire has worsened local air quality and that people should stay inside to reduce health risks related to airborne particular matter from smoke.