

Rim Fire Update

NEWS & ANNOUNCEMENTS:

ARES / RACES Conclude Rim Fire Activation
(Courtesy of ARRL Letter of 05 September 2013)

Amateur Radio volunteers supporting the Red Cross and local government in the wake of the gigantic Rim Fire, in and near California's Yosemite National Park and the Stanislaus National Forest, have stood down after 16 days on duty. The initial callout on August 19 responded to a request to assist the Red Cross in setting up an evacuation center in Groveland, California. Shelter operations relocated the following day to the Tuolumne County Fairgrounds in Sonora, Tuolumne County ARES Emergency Coordinator Carl Croci, NI6Z, reported. Also on August 20, the Tuolumne County Office of Emergency Services requested Amateur Radio assistance to staff the Sonora Red Cross shelter and the community information telephone system at the Tuolumne County emergency operations center. Croci and Tuolumne County RACES Radio Officer Phil Fish, WB6GGY, handled the callout and soon had volunteers for both locations as well as some on standby. On September 4, Croci announced the end of the ARES-RACES activation.

"This morning, I learned the Rim Fire was considered 80

percent

contained," he said. "The community information phones have been secured. All

evacuations have been lifted, the Red Cross is dismantling the shelter, and

we ham radio operators are trying to get our stations back in working order." At one point the Tuolumne County Fairgrounds was

sheltering some 100 evacuees.

Croci said that in the Groveland area, where he lives, residents are

still dealing with morning smoke, which he anticipates will remain for a

while. "Estimates are the fire will not be considered out until the first rain

or snow," he added.

More than two dozen radio amateurs were involved in the Rim Fire

callout. Croci said the US Forest Service Type One Team told him that the combined

operation conducted by Tuolumne County OES, ARES-RACES, the Tuolumne

chapter of the Red Cross and the cooperation of the people of Tuolumne County

will serve as an example for future operations."

Croci expressed his thanks to all volunteers, and cited Fish "for

his extraordinary operation and scheduling of personnel during the Rim

Fire and Barbara Fish, KE6RGP, for leading the PIO operation." Volunteers

from Calaveras County ARES also participated in the activation.

To the south, Fresno County ARES assisted the Central Valley

Red Cross with communications, relaying information from a shelter to the Red Cross headquarters in Fresno. For a time Mariposa County ARES staffed a shelter at Greeley Hills community Center, ready to pass traffic to Red Cross Headquarters. Fresno County EC Dan Pruitt, AE6SX, said volunteers set up August 26 at the Red Cross office in Fresno, where they installed a station capable of operating on emergency power.

"We made contact with Mariposa County ARES at the Greeley Hill shelter," Pruitt said. "We passed traffic until we were asked to shut down for the night." Volunteers returned early the next day. They dismantled the station on August 27. Pruitt said eight volunteers turned out for that activation.

During the activation, Fresno County ARES used Fldigi and Flmsg – a forms management editor – on PSK125 to pass traffic from the shelter and the Red Cross Headquarters. "We found that the faster speed and wider signal [resulted in] fewer errors." Pruitt said, adding that the Red Cross "was very impressed" with their ability to send and receive traffic in the Incident Command System general message form (ICS-213), filled out and printed.

As of September 4, the Rim Fire had claimed nearly 236,000

acres

and more than 100 structures, including a few homes. The cost to date of

battling the fire was estimated at more than \$77 million.

The Salvation Army in Grafton, WV, Provides Water in Phillippi

Philippi, WV (September 3, 2013) – Yesterday, the small town on

Philippi, located in Barbour County (located in the north central

portion of West Virginia on U.S. Routes 119 and 250) was without water

after damaging storms hit the area. The Salvation Army in Grafton came to

the aid with 66 cases of bottled water.

“With the help of Wal-Mart and other generous donors, The Salvation Army

in Grafton gave out over 2,500 bottles of water to those in need,” said Lt. Benny Carringer, Pastor/Commanding Officer of The

Salvation Army in Grafton. “We just received word last night that

the water leak was repaired and we are on stand down with our mobile

feeding canteen until further notice.”

“It was a blessing to have volunteers come out during a time of need,”

said Lt. Benny Carringer. “People were just thankful for a bottle of water.” Because of the overwhelming call of volunteers, we

ask that people to call first before coming out. For more information, please contact: The Salvation Army Grafton at (304) 265-3565.

Check out [_Disaster.SalvationArmyUSA_](http://disaster.salvationarmyusa.org/)
(<http://disaster.salvationarmyusa.org/>) .org for the latest in
news about The
Salvation Army Emergency Disaster
Services and SATERN.

Also check out the Yahoo! Group SATERNSouth for all the latest
news,
information, and events of the Southern Territory

Regards and 73

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