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Fire on Usal Creek reaches 130 acres



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By [Mendocino Beacon](#) and [Bay Area News Group](#) |

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Around 100 campers remained stranded at a remote North Coast campground Sunday night, a CalFire spokesman said, after a fire that started nearby burned at least 130 acres along the only access road to Highway 1.

CalFire stated Sunday that the fire reportedly started at Usal Campground about 30 miles north of Fort Bragg and about ten miles west of Leggett. According to a forester on a neighboring property, the fire burned south, partly along Usal Road. It had reached 130 acres by Sunday night and was about 30 percent contained, according to CalFire.

People in the campground were asked to shelter in place starting Saturday morning. No injuries were reported.

According to Linwood Gill, forest manager for Redwood Forest Foundation, Inc., which owns timberland to the east, "(The) fire started on the south side of the campground, just above the beach, and burned southeast along the ridge and the Usal County Road. It did not burn up into Usal Creek. Acreage size and containment is the same I was hearing (130 acres, 30 percent containment). The fire was at least 1/2 mile away from Candelabra Trees and northern end of Peter Douglas Trail."

CalFire stated that the cause of the fire is under investigation, but according to a member of the Westport Volunteer Fire Department, the initial call stated that fireworks had ignited grass on a hillside.

CalFire Information Officer Scott McLean told the Bay Area News Group Saturday that the fire was slow-burning in an area with heavy timber.

McLean said Sunday night that containment and acreage were unchanged Sunday afternoon. He said fixed-wing aircraft were used on Sunday morning, but they had been called off by the end of the day. Two U.S. Forest Service helicopters remained on the fire Sunday night, he said, along with 10 engines, four bulldozers, six hand crews and four water tenders.

McLean said about 100 people are sheltering in place at Usal Campground Sunday night. He said they are safe and well supplied and are being checked on by the Mendocino County Sheriff's Office.

The Usal Fire is the largest of three wildland fires reported in California this weekend. The others are in Siskiyou County: the Tree Fire (83 acres) and the Community Fire (35 acres). Saturday, July 27, was the one-year anniversary of the Mendocino Complex Fire, which burned 459,000 acres.