

NEWS RELEASE

USDA Forest Service

San Bernardino National Forest

602 South Tippecanoe Avenue, San Bernardino, CA 92408



Date: August 30, 2006

Release: Immediate

Contact: Fire Information Center

Phone: 909.383.5688

Emerald Fire Update # 2

Cause of Fire Determined to be Illegal and Negligent Target Shooting

SAN BERNARDINO, CALIF. – Officials have determined illegal and negligent target shooting as cause for the wildfire burning on the San Bernardino National Forest and state land. The official point of origin was on land protected by the California Department of Forestry (CDF) within the City of Highland, on Aqueduct Road, just south of Villers Street. Substantial evidence was collected, submitted to the Department of Justice, and used in furthering the investigation. Tips aiding the investigation can be submitted to CDF at (909) 883-1112. *(This number is ONLY for investigation purposes; fire information can be obtained at (909) 383-5688, as indicated below.)*

The fire, known as the Emerald Fire, began at approximately 3:02 p.m. on Tuesday afternoon. Weather taken about two hours after the fire started showed humidity levels to be at 12%, indicating fuel moisture was in single digits at time of origin. The forest prohibits open shooting except for designated areas.

The fire burned rapidly closing Highway 38 from Bryant Street to Valley of the Falls Drive, and causing mandatory evacuation of the Mountain Home Village and Loch Leven Conference Center. The Highway 38 road closure and mandatory evacuations remain in effect.

The Emerald Fire continues to actively burn, with size reported at 2000 acres and 40% containment. The fire continues to burn easterly, toward last year's Thurman Fire, where there is less fuel to consume.

Three minor injuries have been reported – one with chest pains, one insect bite, and one heat related. Two homes and two outbuildings are confirmed destroyed by the fire.

Area residents should remain alert and prepared in the event of sudden changes in local wildfire activity. Residents should listen to local radio and television stations for updates on wildfires and road closure information.

Additional information can be found at www.inciweb.org or by calling (909) 383-5688. Further Emerald Fire updates will be issued as conditions change.

#

8/30/06 12:30 p.m.