

Table Top Wildfire – Friday, May 3, 2019

Incident Scenario

Date: Tuesday, October 1, 2019

Time: 0325 hours

Weather: At time of ignition - 75 degrees, 15% humidity. Predicted daytime temperature - 90 degrees and 8% humidity. Temperatures have been in the mid-90’s for six days. There has not been any measurable precipitation since April 30. After above average winter precipitation, there is an abundance of grasses and ladder fuels present. During the 9/30/19 morning fire weather forecast, it was noted that fuel moisture is 15%. RED FLAG WARNING ISSUED at 0800 hours 9/30/2019 and for 10/1/2019.

Winds: Steady 28 m.p.h. from the southwest, with gusts up to 40 m.p.h.

Fire Origin: Middle Fork of the Cosumnes River, Latitude N 38 ̊ 35’ 51.87”, Longitude: W 120 ̊ 34’ 42.46”. Elevation 2350’ and extremely steep terrain.

Upon returning to quarters (from a traffic collision response) at Station 31, 7960 Grizzly Flat Road, Pioneer FPD Chief 8600 sees a fast-growing fire in the steep canyon of the middle fork of the Cosumnes River and calls it in to Camino Fire Dispatch. Dispatch is also receiving multiple calls from residents on both the north and south sides of the canyon.

A “high level” response is dispatched, but due to darkness, aircraft could not be dispatched. USFS Engine 363 is off the Eldorado National Forest on a complex fire in Riverside County. Upon checkback, Pioneer FPD Engine 338 advised dispatch they are out-of-service “mechanical”. Due to the lack of roads to access the fire and poor overnight humidity recovery, it grows exponentially overnight.

Sunrise is at 0701 hours. Shortly thereafter, reconnaissance aircraft reports the fire has grown to approximately 920 acres and is rapidly approaching the community of Grizzly Flats.

Without accurate information on the fire, Walt Tyler Elementary School did start its day as usual.

Leoni Meadows Campground is full to capacity with 600 campers and 100 staff members.

Many of the working full-time residents have already “headed down the hill” to go to work for the day. Many also stayed home when learning of the fire.

The time is now 0700 hours and you have just arrived at the command post for the incident, located at Pioneer Fire Protection District Station 31 located at 7960 Grizzly Flat Road. The staging area is located at Saluti Cellars winery; 7505 Grizzly Flat Road.