

California's Rim Fire doubles to 125,000 acres

August 25 2013



A US Forest Service firefighter monitors a spot fire while battling the Rim Fire on August 24, 2013 in Yosemite National Park, California. The so-called Rim Fire doubled in size in just one day, and the 125,600-acre (510-square kilometre) blaze was only five percent contained, according to InciWeb, the online Incident Information System that monitors fires in the western United States.

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But more help was on the way, with California securing federal financial aid to help mobilize resources to extinguish the monster blaze.

"Current wildfire activity throughout the state has stretched our own resources, and those of our partners," California Office of Emergency Services Director Mark Ghilarducci said in a statement.

"This funding is critical to ensure local and state firefighters have the tools that they need to get the job done."

Extremely dry conditions due to a prolonged drought, coupled with inaccessible terrain in the affected area, have exacerbated the severity of the fire.

According to InciWeb, 2,672 workers are responding to the fire.

"Additional efforts are focused on the eastern edge of the fire in Yosemite National Park to minimize impacts to our national treasure," it said.



A bear and cub cross a road near the Rim Fire on August 24, 2013 in Yosemite National Park, California. Firefighters in California struggled to contain a giant blaze threatening thousands of homes and sweeping into the storied Yosemite National Park.

Governor Jerry Brown late Friday declared a [state of emergency](#) for San Francisco—which lies some 200 miles (320 kilometers) to the west—because the Pacific coast city gets much of its electricity from the region affected by the fire.

The fire broke out on August 17 at the Stanislaus National Park, which along with Yosemite is among the state's main natural tourist attractions.

Some 2,000 firefighters battled the blaze with help from tanker planes and helicopters, which dumped flame retardant chemicals from the air. About 4,500 structures are threatened by the wildfire.

Temperatures are mild, but the fire has been fed by the extremely low humidity, dry scrub brush and trees, and gusts of strong wind that pushed the flames into narrow canyons and ridges that are hard for firefighters to reach.

Officials have ordered the small towns of Tuolumne and Ponderosa Hills evacuated. Officials also closed a major interstate highway running through the region.



The Rim Fire burns close to Groveland Ranger Station near Yosemite National Park, California, August 23, 2013. Satellite photos show giant columns of white smoke from the fire drifting far into the neighboring state of Nevada.

Earlier, Brown declared a state of emergency in Tuolumne County, allowing him to use additional resources to battle the fire.

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The Rim Fire "continues to exhibit very large fire growth due to extremely dry fuels and inaccessible terrain," Inciweb said.

It said fire crews were using both direct attack tactics and indirect attack, which creates control lines away from the [fire](#)'s active edge.

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