



U.S. Forest Service  
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## News Release

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U.S. Forest Service firefighter remains hospitalized after suffering serious burns while battling a wildfire in Northern California

*Three other firefighters were treated and released Sunday*

VALLEJO, California, July 28, 2015 – A U.S. Forest Service firefighter remains hospitalized at the Firefighters Burn Institute Regional Burn Center at U.C. Davis Medical Center in Sacramento after suffering burns while battling a wildfire in Northern California. The incident occurred just before 5p.m. on the Lowell Fire in Nevada County.

Matt Aoki, a U.S. Forest Service wildland firefighter, suffered 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> degree burns over his hands and face. He currently serves as the Captain on the Los Padres Hotshots from the Los Padres National Forest (central California coast).

Three other wildland firefighters, two from CAL FIRE and one from the U.S. Forest Service, were treated for less serious burns and were released from the Burn Institute on Sunday evening. The U.S. Forest Service firefighter treated and released on Sunday was Joe Milligan from the Beckwourth (Type 2IA) initial attack crew based on the Plumas National Forest.

A Serious Accident Review Team (SART) comprised of U.S. Forest Service and CAL FIRE safety experts is reviewing the incident.

As of Tuesday, the Lowell Fire is 2,233 acres and 30 percent contained. The incident is under the jurisdiction of CAL FIRE. The U.S. Forest Service and numerous other agencies and departments are assisting. The northeast portion of the fire has burned onto the Tahoe National Forest.

The mission of the U.S. Forest Service, part U.S. Department of Agriculture, is to sustain the health, diversity and productivity of the nation's forests and grasslands to meet the needs of present and future generations. The agency manages 193 million acres of public land, provides assistance to state and private landowners, and maintains the largest forestry research organization in the world. Public lands the Forest Service manages contribute more than \$13 billion to the economy each year through visitor spending alone. Those same lands provide 20 percent of the nation's clean water supply, a value estimated at \$7.2 billion per year. The agency has either a direct or indirect role in stewardship of about 80 percent of the 850 million forested acres within the U.S., of which 100 million acres are urban forests where most Americans live.

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