



# NEWS



## News Headlines 07/20/2021

- Six hikers hoisted from Deep Creek Hot Springs area after suffering dehydration
- Motorcycle rider killed in crash after Jeep runs stop sign in Hesperia, authorities say
- The Bootleg Fire in Oregon is so large, it's creating its own weather
- Northern California wildfires scorch more than 158,000 acres. PG&E may be partly to blame

## **Six hikers hoisted from Deep Creek Hot Springs area after suffering dehydration**

**Rene Ray De La Cruz, Victorville Daily Press**

Posted: July 20, 2021



Two San Bernardino County Sheriff's Aviation teams hoist rescued six hikers suffering from dehydration in the Deep Creek Hot Springs area on Saturday, July 17, 2021. Courtesy of The San Bernardino County Sheriff's Department

A pair of San Bernardino County Sheriff's Aviation teams hoist-rescued six hikers over the weekend after the group became dehydrated in the Deep Creek Hot Springs area, authorities said.

As temperatures hovered near 100 degrees on Saturday afternoon, crews from sheriff's helicopters 40-King-5 and 40-King-6 conducted the hoist rescues for the hikers who live in the Lancaster area.

Those rescued included Gabriel Garcia, 20; Erica Carter, 20; Michael Carter, 25; Sean Carter, 26; Bryan Carter, 50; and Sakae Carter, 56.

**San Bernardino County Fire** dispatch received a 911 call on Saturday from the hikers, in the Deep Creek Hot Springs area off Highway 173, south of Apple Valley.

The call to dispatch included a plea for help as the group could no longer continue their hike due to dehydration that left one hiker very ill.

County Fire and deputies from the Twin Peaks Sheriff's Station responded to a designated landing zone off Highway 173 and coordinated with crews from the sheriff's aviation unit.

40-King-6 was already in the area performing an unrelated hoist rescue of another dehydrated hiker on the Apple Valley side of Deep Creek. Once the helicopter completed that rescue, the crew began searching for the six hikers, locating them on a steep mountainside.

A medic was hoisted down to the hikers to assess their conditions. The rugged terrain meant the helicopter could not land, and the crew decided that a helicopter rescue was the best option.

The crew of 40-King-5 responded from Apple Valley and assisted 40-King-6 with hoisting the hikers to safety.

The medic on the ground secured each hiker into a rescue harness before the individuals were hoisted to safety one at a time. Once aboard, the helicopters took the group to waiting medical personnel at a nearby landing zone.

The crew of 40-King-6 included pilot Corporal Ryan Pepler, hoist operator Reserve Deputy Stephen Miller and Medic Nurse Wendy Kruger.

The crew of 40-King-5 included pilot Deputy Doug Brimmer, and hoist operator Corporal Chris Mejia.

<https://www.vvdailypress.com/story/news/2021/07/20/six-hikers-hoisted-deep-creek-hot-springs-area-after-suffering-dehydration/8023334002/>

## Motorcycle rider killed in crash after Jeep runs stop sign in Hesperia, authorities say

Rene Ray De La Cruz, Victorville Daily Press

Posted: July 19, 2021



Hesperia officials are investigating a fatal collision that occurred Sunday, July 18, 2021, and killed a 46-year-old motorcycle rider.  
Daily Press File Photo

A 46-year motorcycle rider has died after broadsiding a Jeep that ran a stop sign at the intersection of Mesa Street and Ninth Avenue in Hesperia, according to authorities.

San Bernardino County sheriff's deputies and **San Bernardino County Fire** personnel responded to the scene located in a residential area of the city shortly before noon Sunday.

There, emergency responders pronounced the rider dead. His full identification is pending notification of next of kin, according to sheriff's officials, who did not identify the driver of the jeep.

Deputies determined that the motorcycle was traveling west on Mesa Street when it broadsided the Jeep, which was traveling north on Ninth Avenue and failed to stop at the posted stop sign, authorities said.

The intersection was closed for several hours while the Hesperia Sheriff's Station Major Accident Investigation Team processed the scene.

Drugs and alcohol did not appear to be factors in the collision, authorities said.

Anyone with information, or anyone who may have witnessed the collision, is asked by the sheriff's department to contact Deputy T. Rogoff or Deputy D. Caudle at the Hesperia Sheriff's Station at 760-947-1500.

Callers wishing to remain anonymous can call the We-Tip Hotline at 1-800-78CRIME, (27463) or leave information at [www.wetip.com](http://www.wetip.com).

<https://www.vvdailynews.com/story/news/accident/2021/07/19/motorcycle-rider-killed-crash-after-jeep-runs-stop-sign-hesperia-authorities-say/8018047002/>

## **The Bootleg Fire in Oregon is so large, it's creating its own weather**

Joe Sutton, Michael Guy and Hollie Silverman, CNN

Posted: July 20, 2021



A pyrocumulus cloud from the Bootleg Fire drifts into the air near Bly, Oregon on July 16. (Payton Bruni/AFP/Getty )

As hot, dry weather conditions continue to fuel wildfires across much of the United States, the Bootleg Fire in Oregon has become so intense that it is creating its own weather.

The Bootleg Fire has scorched 537 square miles — an area larger than Los Angeles and about half the size of Rhode Island. It grew to nearly 364,113 acres Monday and is 30% contained, Oregon Department of Forestry spokesperson Marcus Kauffman told CNN.

It's one of at least eight large fires burning in Oregon and one of at least 80 burning across 13 states, according to the National Interagency Fire Center. The climate crisis has made deadlier and more destructive wildfires the new normal.

Much of the West remains under the threat of fire conditions Tuesday, with nearly 3.5 million people under red flag warnings, according to a tweet from the National Weather Service Weather Prediction Center. A red flag warning means “critical fire weather conditions are either occurring now, or will shortly,” the prediction center said.

Excessive heat warnings will continue for more than 337,000 people, and nearly 650,000 more are under a heat advisory.

Temperatures in the region will remain up to 10 degrees above normal over the next 48 hours, CNN Meteorologist Michael Guy said. There's also a chance of dry storms, which lack the precipitation that is desperately needed to help calm the flames.

While some sporadic rain is possible across the Intermountain West, “this is not really going to do much in the way of fighting any of the wildfires out West,” Guy said.

“Some rain may fall from afternoon storms, but it not be enough to stop or put out the fires that are ongoing,” he said.

### **The Bootleg Fire is changing weather**

A satellite image posted by the weather service shows smoke from the fires in western Canada and the Intermountain West billowing over the region.

In Oregon, fire officials noted the Bootleg Fire is showing “aggressive surface spread with pyrocumulus development.”

Pyrocumulus clouds form when extreme heat from the flames of a wildfire force the air to rapidly rise, condensing and cooling any moisture on smoke particles produced by the fire. These clouds essentially become their own thunderstorms and can contain lightning and strong winds.

The fire is “so large and generating so much energy and extreme heat that it’s changing the weather,” Kauffman explained. “Normally, the weather predicts what the fire will do. In this case, the fire is predicting what the weather will do.”

The prolonged drought is also fueling the fire conditions, and Kauffman anticipated the massive blaze will continue to grow.

“The fire is burning in dense fuels that are extremely dry from a prolonged drought. Up until today, the weather has been consistently hot, dry with near single digit humidity,” he said.

### **Third-largest fire in state history**

The Bootleg Fire began on July 6 in the Fremont-Winema National Forest near the California border and has spared little in its path. More than 2,000 people are currently evacuated from their homes, according to Fire Public Information Officer Sarah Gracey.

Sixty-seven homes have been destroyed, along with 117 minor structures, such as sheds or detached garages, Gracey said.

The fire has averaged a rate of spread nearly 1,100 acres per hour for more than 13 consecutive days — a rate that would burn through New York’s Central Park in only 45 minutes. And there appears to be little hope for progress against the flames as wind gusts up to 25 mph are expected over the next couple of days, Guy said.

The Bootleg Fire is the third-largest wildfire in the state’s history, Kauffman said. The Long Draw Fire in 2012 burned 557,028 acres and is the largest wildfire in Oregon since 1900, Kauffman said. The Biscuit Fire in 2002 became the state’s second-largest fire, burning nearly 500,000 acres.

<https://www.mercurynews.com/2021/07/20/the-bootleg-fire-in-oregon-is-so-large-its-creating-its-own-weather/>

## **Northern California wildfires scorch more than 158,000 acres. PG&E may be partly to blame.**

Maggie Angst, Bay Area News Group

Posted: July 19, 2021



The Tamarack Fire burns behind a greenhouse in the Markleeville community of Alpine County, Calif., on Saturday, July 17, 2021. (AP Photo/Noah Berger)

As a series of wildfires — including the state’s first “megafire” of the season — continue to scorch more than 158,000 acres of bone dry forest landscape in Northern California, PG&E revealed that its equipment may have helped spark a growing blaze roaring through remote terrain in Butte County.

In a state regulatory filing late Sunday, PG&E said that state fire investigators collected the utility company’s equipment located in the area where the Dixie Fire ignited in the rugged Feather River Canyon.

“PG&E submits this report in an abundance of caution given CAL FIRE’s collection of PG&E facilities in connection with its investigation,” PG&E stated in its filing with the state Public Utilities Commission.

The latest revelation is yet another black eye for the embattled utility whose equipment has been linked to a series of lethal wildfires in Northern California in recent years.

### **Northern California wildfires scorch more than 158,000 acres. PG&E may be partly to blame.**

The Dixie Fire, which broke out earlier in July, had consumed more than 30,000 acres in Butte County as of Monday morning and remained 15% contained. The fire expanded by more than 11,000 acres overnight, jumping a section of Highway 70 and threatening more than 800 structures, according to Cal Fire.

“Yesterday was a pretty active day at the fire. We had two large plumes and the fire was moving in two different directions,” Cal Fire incident commander Tony Brownell said in a briefing Monday morning. “It’s a very challenging fire because of the terrain and the fuels, but we are making progress.”

On the morning of July 13, PG&E became aware of a power failure at its Crest Dam facility off Highway 70 in Butte County and dispatched a crew to investigate, PG&E stated in its filing with the PUC.

Later that afternoon, a PG&E worker arrived at the site of the power failure and found two blown fuses and “what appeared to him to be a healthy green tree” leaning against the company’s electrical equipment. The employee then noticed a fire on the ground near the base of the tree, prompting him to call 911, PG&E said in its report.

With an hour of PG&E’s call, Cal Fire reportedly began dropping fire retardant and water on the flames.

Denny Boyles, a spokesperson for PG&E, said Monday that the information PG&E submitted is “preliminary” and was submitted “in an abundance of caution.”

“PG&E is cooperating with CAL FIRE’s investigation,” he wrote in an email to this news organization.

Utilities are required to file a report within two to four hours when serious electrical incidents occur, but PG&E waited five days after the employee noted the issue to report it to the state regulatory agency. Boyles said in an email Monday that because Cal Fire did not collect the equipment until Sunday, PG&E is under the assumption that it met its 4-hour weekend requirement when it filed the report later that night.

PG&E equipment has been blamed for a string of devastating fires in recent years, including the state’s deadliest fire — the 2018 Camp Fire in Butte County — not far from where the Dixie Fire is burning. The utility company in May agreed to pay more than \$43 million to 10 cities and counties to resolve civil claims related to the 2019 Kincade Fire and the 2020 Zogg Fire, which state officials determined were both caused by PG&E equipment.

Meanwhile, a quickly expanding fire that started more than two weeks ago continues to explode in the Sierra Nevada mountain range south of Lake Tahoe.

The Tamarack Fire, which measured just 500 acres on Friday, has consumed more than 23,000 acres in Alpine County as of Monday morning. Firefighters have not yet contained any of that blaze.

The fire was ignited by a lightning strike on July 4 but remained relatively small and was burning only in a remote territory until Friday, when a combination of high winds and low humidity began fanning the flames toward more populated areas.

During a meeting with evacuated residents on Monday, Alpine County Sheriff Rick Stephens acknowledged residents’ frustration over what some feel was a delayed and botched response from U.S. Forest officials to address the blaze when they were first made aware of it.

A July 10 Facebook post from the Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forest stated that they made a “tactical management decision” not to dispatch fire crews because of safety concerns, but added that it was “not an unresponsive approach.”

“Why it started, how it started, what went wrong — we’re all upset about it but that’s for another day,” Stephens told residents on Monday. “Today, I am 100% focused on stopping this fire and protecting all your guys’ homes.”

Evacuation orders have been issued for the communities of Markleeville, Grover Hot Springs, Shay Creek, Alpine Village, Woodfords, East Fork Resort, Marklee Village and Hung A Lel Ti. A 26-mile stretch of the Pacific Crest Trail has been closed, as well as a stretch of California Highway 89 and Grover Hot Springs State Park.

National Forest officials report a 60% chance of rain in the area on Monday, though they anticipate that the fire would still remain active and that the anticipated rainfall could cause flooding, making firefighting efforts more difficult.



At least seven structures have been lost due to the blaze, according to authorities, but a damage assessment team was dispatched to determine a more accurate count for the total number of damaged or destroyed structures.

In Plumas County, the massive Beckwourth Complex Fire had burned more than 105,000 acres by Monday morning, making it the state's first megafire of the season. Firefighters have now gained 82% containment on the blaze, officials said Monday.

During a weekend briefing, U.S. Forest Service Operations Section Chief Jake Cagle said that massive fires like this no longer come as a surprise to fire officials, especially given the state's drought conditions and the early start to fire season.

"It's a really busy season," he said. "We're going to continue to see this."

<https://www.mercurynews.com/2021/07/19/northern-california-wildfires-scorch-more-than-158000-acres-as-pge-reveals-it-may-have-sparked-the-dixie-fire/>