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Firefighters gain upper hand on lightning-sparked blazes in Utah
Associated Press

Associated Press

SALT LAKE CITY - Firefighters have gained the upper hand on two fires that threatened the small western Utah town of Terra and the nearby Skull Valley Indian Reservation, burning 36,000 acres.

Although firefighters had to deal with whirlwinds and lower humidity on Wednesday, the fires did not advance, said Jane Pennell, a fire information officer at the Army's Dugway Proving Ground. The fires were burning west of the Army base and about 60 miles southwest of Salt Lake City.

Crews were building a line around the east side of the 31,500-acre Davis-Knolls fire and were dousing hot spots, Pennell said.

The blaze was started by lightning on Monday and threatened the 28 homes in and around Terra and some structures on the nearby Indian reservation.

Several dozen Terra residents who had been evacuated Monday returned to their homes the next day.

The Davis-Knolls blaze scorched at least seven power poles, cutting off electricity to the Dugway Army base and the surrounding area late Monday night. Electricity was restored Tuesday, Utah Power spokesman Dave Eskelsen said.

By Wednesday morning, fire crews had it 60 percent contained and predicted it would be under full control by Friday evening.

Meanwhile, fire crews were working toward full control of the 4,500-acre blaze near the Skull Valley Goshute Indian Reservation Wednesday evening. The fire there, 10 miles to the north of the Davis-Knolls fire, destroyed a corral but did not threaten other structures.

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the south, the last of the five fires that made up the 100-acre Sorenson Complex of fires in west-central Utah was declared contained Tuesday evening, with control expected today, said Bert Hart, public information officer for the Bureau of Land Management's Richfield District.

Overnight Tuesday, fire crews with the help from BLM in Nevada discovered and contained a 300-acre lightning fire just east of Topaz Mountain, about 45 miles northwest of Delta. Wildfires burn in Nevada

Review-Journal

A rash of small wildfires in White Pine County has destroyed more than 250 acres, Bureau of Land Management officials said Wednesday.

Curtis Tucker, a BLM special projects coordinator at the agency's Ely district office, said more than 30 fires have been reported in White Pine and Lincoln counties in the past two days. The cause for each blaze is believed to be lightning.

"In the 24-hour period around July 8, we had more than 6,000 lightning strikes reported," Tucker said. "I've been in eastern Nevada for more than 10 years, and this is the worst I've seen."

A majority of the fires have been attacked and contained before they could cause major damage, Tucker said. In one fire in Lincoln County, a BLM truck was destroyed when winds shifted, causing firefighters to abandon the vehicle.

----- INDEX REFERENCES -----

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