



NEWS RELEASE

Yocha Dehe Fire Dept. Joins Fire Battles Across California

YDFD Fire Chief Urges Caution and Care During Dangerous Fire Season.

Brooks, CA (Sept. 12, 2013) – The Yocha Dehe Fire Department (YDFD) has just wrapped up an intense six weeks of firefighting operations at four major fires across California: the Rim Fire near Yosemite National Park, the Orleans Complex Fire in Six Rivers National Forest near Eureka, the Swedes Fire in Butte County and the Hough Fire near Quincy.

As part of its participation in California Mutual Aid Agreements and the Yolo County Strike Team, YDFD firefighters and paramedics were on the front lines, working side by side with agencies from across the state. At the peak, Yolo County departments, including YDFD, had 45 firefighters, 12 engines and three supervisors working fires in other parts of the state.

“Working cooperatively and effectively with other departments to save lives and protect property is at the core of what we do and for what we train,” said Gary Fredericksen, YDFD Fire Chief. “When our department was created by the people of the Yocha Dehe Wintun Nation, being ready and equipped to protect our entire community was the top priority.”

At the Rim Fire near Yosemite National Park, YDFD firefighters and equipment were part of a five department Yolo County Strike Team. They began their deployment in Tuolumne City, where they joined crews protecting homes and business structures. They were then assigned to ‘hot shot’ teams that moved, on foot, into wooded areas of Yosemite National Park. Using only hand tools and working 24 hour shifts, they set back fires to slow the spread of the enormous blaze that has consumed more than 250,000 acres.

Over a 28 day span starting in early August, four YDFD paramedics were deployed to the Orleans Complex fire in the Six River National Forest near Eureka where two different fires merged to burn 21,680 acres. YDFD paramedics provided critical treatment to heat exhausted firefighters, and to one firefighter with a bee sting who went into anaphylactic shock.

In mid August, a YDFD brush fire team joined a Yolo County Strike Team at the Swedes Fire in Butte County, southeast of Oroville for four days. And, when that fire was contained, during the trip home, they were diverted to the Hough Fire in Quincy for three more days of frontline firefighting work.

“We are honored to serve alongside the many brave men and women from across the state who respond to these emergencies and we feel fortunate to have our people home safely,” added Fredericksen. “Our hearts go out to those who have lost so much in these terrible fires.”

Yocha Dehe Fire Department Joins Fire Battles (cont.)

Fredericksen added a note of caution. "Fire season is still upon us, and everyone has a role to play in preventing more fires. These dry, hot conditions demand our utmost fire vigilance," he said. "By being careful with all types of fire and the use of tools and equipment that can ignite fires, we all can work together to reduce the risk of these dangerous, tragic events."

Yocha Dehe Fire Department provides full-service fire and life safety response for its local community and beyond. Reflecting the values of the Yocha Dehe Wintun Nation and its commitment to its neighbors in Yolo County, YDFD partners with the Capay Valley Fire Protection District, Esparto Fire Protection District, Madison Fire Protection District and CAL FIRE. YDFD is the only internationally accredited tribal fire department in the world.

YDFD has 32 uniformed and three administrative employees and a full complement of equipment. In addition to fire suppression and emergency medical services, YDFD performs technical rescues, such as swift-water rescue, trench rescue, confined-space rescue, low-angle rescue, vehicle extrication rescue and specialized search and rescue. To learn more about the Yocha Dehe Fire Department please visit: www.yochadehe.org/tribal-government/yochadehe-fire-department.

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Yocha Dehe Wintun Nation is an independent, self-governed nation that supports our people and the Capay Valley, CA community by strengthening our culture, stewarding our land and creating economic independence for future generations.

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