

Storm Data and Unusual Weather Phenomena - September 2020

Location	Date/Time	Deaths & Injuries	Property & Crop Dmg	Event Type and Details
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CALIFORNIA, South Central

(CA-Z194) SEQUOIA KINGS

	09/01/20 00:00 PST		0	Wildfire
	09/30/20 23:59 PST	15	0	

The lightning caused Castle fire was discovered on the morning of August 19, 2020. It was located 25 miles north of Kernville on the Sequoia National Forest and just a few miles east of the Giant Sequoia National Monument. It grew slowly at first, reaching 2000 acres on August 23rd. It grew rapidly to 15,000 acres by August 25th and to 35,674 acres by August 31st. The rapid growth resulted in evacuations of several small mountain communities and the closure of Highway 190 and several other mountain roads. On August 29, the Castle fire was combined with the smaller Shot Gun fire to become the SQF Complex. Containment remained at zero as of August 31st and the cost thus far was \$5.6 Million. This fire continued into October.

(CA-Z179) WEST SIDE HILLS, (CA-Z180) SAN JOAQUIN CONFLUENCE, (CA-Z181) MERCED AND MADERA, (CA-Z182) WESTERN SAN JOAQUIN VALLEY, (CA-Z183) FOGGY BOTTOM, (CA-Z184) FRESNO, (CA-Z185) TULARE COUNTY, (CA-Z186) SOUTHERN KINGS COUNTY, (CA-Z187) WESTERN SAN JOAQUIN VALLEY IN KERN COUNTY, (CA-Z188) EASTERN SAN JOAQUIN VALLEY IN KERN COUNTY, (CA-Z189) BAKERSFIELD, (CA-Z190) CENTRAL SIERRA FOOTHILLS, (CA-Z191) SOUTHERN SIERRA FOOTHILLS, (CA-Z195) LAKE ISABELLA, (CA-Z196) TEHACHAPI AREA, (CA-Z197) FORT TEJON

	09/04/20 10:00 PST		0	Heat
	09/07/20 20:00 PST		0	

(CA-Z198) INDIAN WELLS VALLEY, (CA-Z199) KERN COUNTY DESERT

	09/04/20 10:00 PST		0	Excessive Heat
	09/06/20 20:00 PST		0	

A large high pressure center that was centered over the four corners region strengthened on September 4 and brought near record high temperatures to eastern Kern County. The high strengthened further on September 5 and provided the San Joaquin Valley and the Sierra foothills as well as the Kern County Desert areas with a period of oppressive heat during the Labor Day holiday weekend between September 5 and 7. A low pressure system dropped from western Canada into the Great Basin on September 8 resulting in lowering temperatures across the area as the large high weakened.

(CA-Z190) CENTRAL SIERRA FOOTHILLS, (CA-Z192) CENTRAL SIERRA, (CA-Z193) NORTH KINGS RIVER

	09/04/20 17:30 PST		0	Wildfire
	09/30/20 23:59 PST	29	0	

MADERA COUNTY --- 7.7 E CENTRAL CAMP [37.35, -119.34], 11.5 ENE BEASORE [37.52, -119.31]

	09/05/20 14:17 PST		0	Tornado (EF2, L: 12.02 mi , W: 50 yd)
	09/05/20 14:37 PST		0	Source: NWS Storm Survey

Storm survey conducted by on site NWS IMET. EF2 damage just north of Mammoth Pool, inside Wagner Campground and near Chawanakee Joint Elementary School. Multiple 2 foot diameter trees were snapped 20-30 feet up with branches and bark removed. The firewhirl produced estimated winds at 115-125 mph.

FRESNO COUNTY --- CEDAR CREST [37.25, -119.20], 1.0 NW LAKESHORE [37.26, -119.18]

	09/05/20 16:29 PST		0	Tornado (EF1, L: 1.12 mi , W: 25 yd)
	09/05/20 16:39 PST		0	Source: NWS Storm Survey

Storm survey conducted by on site NWS IMET near Huntington Lake indicating winds of 90-107 mph consistent with an EF1 tornado. The firewhirl was a result of unprecedented fire behavior. Video and pictures show large live 15 inch diameter trees snapped. Several large root balls from the trees were completely pulled out of the ground.

The Creek fire started at 633 pm PDT on September 4th (Labor Day Weekend) in the vicinity of Big Creek, California near the town of Shaver Lake. The fire was in an area of very heavy tree mortality in the Sierra National Forest. The fire had explosive grown on September 5th and 6th under excessive heat and low humidity, but not much wind. The fire became plume dominated on the 5th and column collapses were noted by AlertFire Cameras late on the 5th within the extremely unstable environment. Damaging fire whirls occurred just north of Mammoth Pool with ground survey estimated winds at 115-125 mph, and near Huntington Lake with patterns indicating winds of 90-107 mph. By the evening of September 6th, the fire had grown to 73,278 acres. Extensive smoke allowed the fire to slow some by Monday and Tuesday September 7th-8th, however the fire continued to grow, reaching nearly 153,000 acres by September 9th. Around this time, the complexity of the incident necessitated management of the fire to be split into a north zone and a south zone with 2 overhead teams assigned. The fire closed Highway 168 and may local roads and there were evacuations of as many as 45,000 people. Hundreds of people were rescued by California National Guard helicopters from the Mammoth Pool area and

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also from the China Peak ski resort. Hot and dry conditions under strong high pressure continued throughout the remainder of September with extensive smoke often hampering air operations. By the end of September the fire had burned 307,051 acres and had destroyed 853 structures and damaged 64 others. Cost of containment was \$106 Million. The fire continued to burn into November.