

RAGING IDAHO FIRE KILLS TWO MEN, INJURES MANY

4000 Fighters Sweat Along Front of Worst Blaze in 24 Years.

By Associated Press.

The fire demon raging in the Selway national forest of central Idaho rose in its wrath and last night two men were dead and others injured.

Four Hurt in Accident.

They were identified later by officials at the district CCC headquarters as LeRoy McGinnis, Kewanee, Ill., and Lester Johnson, Galesburg, Ill., two of the hundreds from the CCC camp fighting the flames on Pete King creek.

They were among the replacement troopers who arrived in the district last month from the French creek camp. An unconfirmed report was that they were struck by a falling snag. Four others were reported to have been injured in the same accident.

Eat Up Rich Timber.

Four major blazes and countless spot fires swept uncontrolled through the rich timber belt last night, while roads between Lewiston and the forests were carrying a constant stream of fire fighters and equipment.

Nearly 4000 men were mobilized on the fire front. Forest service officials declared the situation to be the most serious since 1910, when a historic fire swept the region.

Planes Are Helpless.

Howard Flint, regional forest inspector, returned to Spokane after a day of attempting to survey the fires from the air and land men and supplies. Because of the dense smoke, planes were forced to abandon the ferrying of men after placing about a dozen in the vicinity of the Selway river. Supplies and men were moved from Grangeville, Idaho.

New Fire, 1500 Acres.

On the Clearwater forest, in the same region, a new fire appeared to have covered about 1500 acres on Pot mountain, on the north fork of the Clearwater river.

Heavy blankets of smoke defeated attempts to estimate the size of the Pete King creek fire, near the confluence of the Selway river and middle fork of the Clearwater, and the Fish butte blaze, on both sides of the Locksaw river basin.

The bodies of LeRoy McGinnis and Lester Johnson, killed when they were struck by a falling tree in the Mud creek fire in the Selway forest, will be sent to their homes in Illinois today. The victims of the fire were CCC enrollees. Several other men were seriously hurt in fighting this fire which has already burned over 10,000 acres of timber and is yet out of control. There are 3000 men fighting the blazes.

Have Little Rain.

In the Boundary district a spatter of rain fell. The fires there are all under control, even the new Lynch creek blaze.

The Hamil creek fire at Kaslo is virtually out and only a patrol is watching it, while the upper Duncan fire is being left to itself.

The Salmo fire is quiet and progress was made in placing a guard around the Hell Roaring creek blaze. The Ten Mile fire is in good shape and the new fire that broke out Sunday at Baskin's timber limits is corralled. The Apex and Forty-nine Creek fires also were controlled.

At present the number of fire fighters in this section has been reduced to 360 men.

Sheep in Danger.

Embers from the Fish creek fire started a new blaze that had covered several sections on Coolwater creek, 35 miles east of Kootenai. Several bands of sheep were believed to be menaced.

Another blaze started from the wind-borne embers was gnawing into timber stands on Old Man's creek, north of the Lochsa river. Fires on Indian ridge, Smith creek and Meadow creek were ringed with trenches and under control.

All fires were under control in the Clearwater forest except a burn which had covered 1800 acres on Rock creek, near Pot mountain. The Nez Perce forest also was quiet, with 10 small fires intrrenched.

Bison Are Saved.

Although the fire hazard remains high, the disastrous blaze started Saturday by a lightning bolt on the national bison range near Moiese, Mont., was reported Monday under control.

Robert S. Norton, superintendent of the range, advised the biological survey at Washington that about 5300 of the 18,500 acres on the range were burned over but the buffalo herd of some 600 animals had escaped.

The buffalo herd is one of the few remaining herds in the country. Unestimated losses were reported among the mule deer, elk and mountain sheep. Fire fighters and reserves and equipment sent from Missoula, Mont., by the forest service were credited with aiding in preservation of the bison.

Face Tough Winter.

The fire started about 5 a. m. and was soon a wall of roaring flames eating into the dry range grass, destroying forage and an extensive belt of timber that afforded shelter for the buffalo and other animals in severe weather. The long prevailing drought and a high wind made the task of the fire fighters more difficult.

Officials of the biological survey said destruction of vegetation and timber cover over such a wide area probably will make it necessary to provide emergency feed supplies for the surviving animals.

B. C. Fires Corralled.

NELSON, B. C., Aug. 13.—Fire fighters breathed more easily today as forest fires in the East and West Kootenay and Boundary districts were controlled and in many cases the crews reduced to patrols. A light shower of rain fell in scattered sections of these areas, although not enough to materially check the fires. At no place are the fires doing real damage.

In the East Kootenay district the new fire was controlled today near Fernie, and the big fire on the Kootenay river in the Invermere district is controlled. At Sand Creek, near Creston, the fire is burning in the upper timber regions and is not doing any harm. The crew here was reduced from 100 to 50 men.