

August 28, 2018

Justin McDonald, Fire Chief
Arcata Fire District
Office | (707) 825-2000
jmcdonald@arcatafire.org
www.arcatafire.org

DISTRICT BOARD COMMENDS STAFF AND THEIR FAMILIES FOLLOWING DEPLOYMENT TO FIGHT CALIFORNIA WILDFIRES

(McKinleyville CA) – August 21, 2018 – Arcata Fire District Board of Directors passed a Resolution commending the Arcata Fire District Personnel and their families for their support and response to the mutual aid for the California wildfires.

Thus far in 2018 – potentially the most devastating wildfire season on record – over a three week period of time, Arcata Fire District sent nine career firefighters, four volunteer firefighters, one Battalion Chief and three pieces of equipment to the Mendocino Complex wildfires and station coverage for Mendocino CalFire.

At their Regular Board meeting, the District Board wanted to express their profound pride and gratitude to all the personnel, and their very supportive families. “Several firefighters were gone for weeks, which can put a strain on family life. It’s important not to forget the families of our responders,” stated Board President, Rene Campbell.

“We are committed to California’s Mutual Aid System of neighbor-helping-neighbor when disaster strikes,” continued Campbell. “As we see larger and more devastating wildfires claim lives and homes across California, our agencies will continue sending resources to help our fellow Californians, balanced against the need to protect our own communities during fire, medical and other types of emergencies here at home.”

When a wildfire becomes too large for the initial responding agency – either the local fire agency, CAL FIRE or US Forest Service – additional personnel and equipment from other communities are sent through California’s Mutual Aid System. The system is operated by the Governor’s Office of Emergency Services (Cal OES), which typically deploys resources in groups called “strike teams” consisting of five fire engines and firefighting personnel. Water tenders, aircraft, dispatch personnel and incident management personnel may also be deployed through the Mutual Aid System.

For major wildfire incidents, mutual aid resources from California communities, other states and even other countries may provide the majority of emergency response equipment and personnel that ultimately responds to that incident.

The Arcata Fire District Board of Directors is incredibly proud and grateful for the dedicated professionalism and teamwork by personnel and their families in support of the regional and neighboring communities during what has been called the largest wildfire in California history.



On the "Ranch Fire", pictured (left to right) Captain Angela Dervedde, Firefighters Anthony Renteria & Garrett Thun and Captain Gary Savona.



Covering the Mendocino Unit, Woodlands Fire Station, pictured (left to right) Firefighters Anthony Benelisha and Scott Gordinier and Captain Jon Busher.

Resolution Number: 18-200

A RESOLUTION OF THE ARCATA FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT BOARD OF DIRECTORS COMMENDING ARCATA FIRE PERSONNEL AND THEIR FAMILIES FOR OUTSTANDING PROFESSIONAL RESPONSES AND SUPPORT DURING THE 2018 REGIONAL WILDLAND FIRE DISASTER

WHEREAS, between July 23rd and July 27th of 2018, wildland fires started in Shasta, Mendocino and Lake Counties, quickly became catastrophic fire storms of epic proportions. The Carr and Mendocino Complex Fires have and continue to burn a combined 580,000 acres; destroyed over 1,400 residences and 22 commercial structures; while threatening over 10,000 residential and commercial structures. Nine people, including four firefighters, died in the line of duty in incidents associated with these disastrous fires; and

WHEREAS, combined resources assigned to the Carr and Mendocino Complex Fires included over 700 fire engines, 218 water tenders, massive air support, with a total of over 8,500 personnel; and

WHEREAS, the Arcata Fire Protection District, in coordination with members of the Arcata Professional Firefighters Local 4981, and members of the Arcata Volunteer Fire Association, mobilized a rapid response to the regional disaster by combining resources with four other Humboldt County Fire departments; and

WHEREAS, the Arcata Fire Protection District deployed two full fire engine crews and a Battalion Chief to assist with fire station coverage and combating fires in Mendocino County. Staff worked long periods of overtime hours and cancelled days off to support the deployment of personnel and resources to the disaster area while maintaining sufficient staffing to cover our fire district; and

WHEREAS, families, friends, and significant others of Arcata Fire personnel were supremely supportive and patient with the long work hours and prolonged absences of their loved ones. Such support is a vital component for firefighter's to remain focused on safety while working under hazardous conditions.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Board of Directors of the Arcata Fire Protection District wishes to commend and express our profound pride and gratitude to ALL Arcata Fire members and their families, for their dedicated professionalism and incredible teamwork in support of our regional and neighboring communities during what has been called the largest wildfire in California history.

###

