



**News Release**  
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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Contact: Chuck Dalldorf  
Public Information Officer  
(916) 248-3819  
chuckdalldorf@gmail.com

### **San Juan Island Fire and Rescue Joins Multiple State Fire Agencies Deploying to Massive California Wildfires**

FRIDAY HARBOR, WA -- Four San Juan Island Fire and Rescue (SJIF&R) firefighters have been deployed as part of a western Washington regional strike team responding to the massive northern California Kincade Fire disaster in Sonoma County.

SJIF&R Chief Norvin Collins said, "Our firefighters train to safely fight wildfires in all conditions so we are ready to serve our Islands' communities. Throughout our country, the fire service is always ready to serve our neighbors, whether on another island, in another county, or in another state when they call for help in an overwhelming disaster. We are proud and grateful to our firefighters who volunteered to serve on one such disaster."

Chief Collins added, "At this time of year, especially with the rain fall we have received, our island's fire danger is extremely low. We have resources available to contribute to assisting this terrible tragedy while maintaining our full capability to respond to any incident in our community."

The deployed regional strike team comprises firefighters from San Juan, Snohomish, Whatcom, Skagit and Island Counties. The strike team will be assigned specific duties upon arrival at the on-scene Incident Command Post. They join strike teams responding from multiple states dispatched through the national mutual aid system, managed by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). SJIF&R, and all other responding agencies, are fully reimbursed for the use of crews, equipment, fuel, travel and all other related disaster response costs.

Noel Monin, Fire Operations Assistant Chief of SJIF&R, said, "While serving to support a community overwhelmed by a massive wildfire, deployed fire crews gain extensive experience working with other crews, in different terrain and conditions. They bring these experiences back to our community and help increase our preparedness to serve our community."

Mutual aid is a critical component of emergency services preparation and disaster response. Communities provide resources they can spare and in turn, when faced by an extended disaster, they call on multiple resources from other communities. In the San Juan Islands, we face multiple natural disaster threats including wildfires, earthquakes, tsunamis and storms.

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As of 7:30 a.m. on October 29, 2019, the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection states the Kincade Fire status is at 15% containment with 124 structures destroyed, 23 structures damaged. There have been no deaths and two injuries reported. The size of the fire is currently 74,234 acres of involved vegetation. There are currently 4548 personnel assigned with 86 crews, 549 engines, 42 water tenders, 27 helicopters, 66 dozers and numerous firefighting air tankers flying fire suppression missions as conditions allow.

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*The San Juan Island Fire & Rescue was established on October 6, 1958. The fire department covers about 55 square miles, includes all of San Juan Island, as well as Brown and Pearl Islands. For more information, please visit <http://www.sjfire.org/>*