



*****For Immediate Release*****

Captain Deion Glover
Government and Media Relations

**State Fire Marshal's Office
State Fire Marshal Chad Cross**

Date: August 17, 2023
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State Fire Mobilization Authorized for the Toothaker Fire

Benton County – State fire assistance has been mobilized under the Washington State Fire Services Resource Mobilization Plan in support of local firefighters working to contain the Toothaker Fire located in Benton County, near the town of Finley. Washington State Patrol Chief John Batiste authorized the mobilization of state firefighting resources on August 17, 2023, at 3:45 p.m. at the request of Fire Chief Lonnie Click, Benton County Fire District 1.

The Toothaker Fire started on August 17, 2023, at approximately 1:30 p.m. This fire is estimated at 32 acres and growing. It is burning in brush, olives, and grass and is threatening homes, crops, and electrical and railroad infrastructure. Level 2 evacuations are in effect at this time. The fire cause is currently under investigation.

The State Emergency Operations Center at Camp Murray remains activated at Level 2 to help coordinate state assistance for the Toothaker Fire. Mobilization specialists from the Fire Protection Bureau have ordered 1 strike team, air resources, and the fire will be managed by a Type 3 Incident Commander. State Fire Marshal's Office personnel are working remotely to coordinate the dispatch of resources.

Under the State Fire Services Resource Mobilization Plan, the Fire Protection Bureau coordinates the initial dispatch and continued administrative oversight of resources and personnel for the duration of the mobilization. The Mobilization Plan is implemented to provide a process to quickly notify, assemble and deploy fire service personnel, equipment and other resources from around the state when fires, disasters or other events exceed the capacity of local jurisdictions. More information about the Washington State Fire Services Resource Mobilization Plan is available at: <http://www.wsp.wa.gov/all-risk-mobilization/>.

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The State Fire Marshal's Office is a Bureau of the Washington State Patrol, providing fire and life safety services to the citizens of Washington State. These services include public education, licensing and certification of the fire sprinkler, fireworks, and cigarette industries, data collection and analysis, fire and life safety inspections for state facilities, plan review of school construction projects, all-risk mobilization of statewide fire service resources, hazardous materials training, and the training and certification of firefighters.