No End in Sight for Texas Wildfires

Wildfires in Texas have now consumed more than 1.5 million acres of land and Mother Nature has offered no relief in sight. The entire state faces drought-like conditions and strong southerly winds are making the fire dangers worse.

In the past week firefighters have battled 20 separate wildfires that had consumed 1,000 acres or more. Many of these fires have consumed more than 100,000 acres and remain out of control threatening small communities in the western half of the state.

Texas Governor Rick Perry has asked President Obama for a major disaster declaration as a result of the wildfires and continuing fire danger across the state. Governor Perry said firefighters have responded to 7,807 fires that have destroyed 244 homes.

Firefighters from nearby states as well as the National Guard and the Texas Forest Service have been joined by Apache helicopters and C-130 military cargo aircraft in trying to control the fires.

A fire broke out Sunday afternoon within the city limits of Austin that quickly spread through a neighborhood destroying eight homes and damaging ten others. (See attached photo). A homeless man was arrested for starting the fire and he’s been charged with arson.

North of Aspermont, 105 year old cowboy, N.L. “Boss” Winter and his wife Gladys, both lost their childhood homes in the Swenson fire that burned more than 122,000 acres in three counties.

For more information on the location of the fires, see the Texas Forest Service web site at http://txforestservice.tamu.edu/main/default.aspx?dept=news&news_coll=video_gallery&id=5662.

The Insurance Council of Texas is the largest state insurance trade association in the country consisting of approximately 500 property and casualty insurers writing business in Texas. For more information turn to ICT’s Web site at www.insurancecouncil.org.

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