

Sunday, May 6, 2007

For Immediate Release

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Baraga Bump Fire – Media Information Sheet 9:00AM. Day 8 – May 6, 2007

Firefighters woke this morning to gusty southeast winds and forecasts of relative humidities in the single digits. The effectiveness of the hard work done over the last five days by crews mopping up and digging out hot spots on the Baraga Bump Fire will be tested by these weather conditions. The National Weather Service has issued Red Flag Warnings for today until 9:00 p.m. EDT. “Today will be a good test of where we are at with this fire” said Bob Garrison, Incident Commander for the Type 3 Ottawa National Forest Team that is managing the fire. Crews reporting in after yesterdays shift found no active smokes south of the Sturgeon River and this allowed fire managers to shift crews from that area to a central staging area where they will be available to be sent quickly to where they are needed. The containment estimate has reached 100% and the latest GIS acreage estimate is 1127 acres. Containment of 100% signifies that there is a fire line around the entire fire perimeter although hot spots may remain in the interior.

The weather conditions changed substantially overnight from the overcast skies and cool temperatures of Saturday to the dry, hot and windy forecast for today. Single digit humidities are rare for this area and are more often found in the western United States, low relative humidities increase the drying of fuels and make fire spread more likely. Relief from the hot, dry conditions is forecast for Sunday night with cool, wet weather moving into the area, this change would be welcomed by the firefighters.

Today, 118 personnel are working on the fire, along with 4 water units and 1 dozer. Four hand crews continued to do the bulk of the mop-up work. Firefighters will be available for initial attack on any new fires in the area.

No structures were reported damaged by the fire yesterday. No further evacuations have been needed since those ordered and released on the first day. Fire suppression efforts remain ongoing in the area. There are no road or area closures but residents and the general public should still avoid the fire area and allow firefighters and their equipment to accomplish necessary fire suppression tasks. With the high forecast fire danger the public should be extremely careful with fire throughout today.

Agencies who continue to be involved in the fire include the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (DNR), US Forest Service, Bureau of Indian Affairs, Covington Volunteer Fire Departments, Baraga County Emergency Management, American Red Cross as well as local volunteers. Gifts of homemade food and thank you letters

continue to pour into the Incident Command Post from local residents and the firefighters have been extremely grateful for all the support provided by the residents of Covington. A 20 person crew has tried to repay some of this goodwill by taking down and storing the local ice rink and setting up the stage for the upcoming Finn Fest, which is a big yearly event for the local community.

Fire danger will be very high today, please remember that burn permits are required for any outdoor burning, and will not likely be allowed during such high fire times. Check to see if burn permits may be obtained online at the website [www.michigan.gov/burnpermit](http://www.michigan.gov/burnpermit) or by phone at 1 866 922 2876. Even with issued burning permits, residents are reminded to use extreme caution with any outdoor burning. Residents are also reminded that there are a number of activities that they can accomplish around their properties to protect their dwellings. Firewise activities and concepts can be adopted by residents that can increase their personal safety and the safety of their homes and buildings. More Firewise information can be obtained from Michigan State University Extension Offices and from the Firewise website at [www.firewise.org](http://www.firewise.org).