Lake County, Minnesota  
Fire Evacuation Operation Plan

2000

The evacuation of any of the July 4th, 1999 blow down areas will be under the direction of the Lake County Sheriff or his designee. Notification of any fire or evacuation personnel will be broadcast from the Lake County Sheriff Dispatch Center by radio or pager from the dispatch center in Two Harbors. It is expected that the U.S. Forest Service will assist with necessary media and public contacts relative to evacuation and potential closure of certain sections of the BWCAW.

Activation procedures:

1. Lake County Law Enforcement, Fire & Rescue & emergency Management – Notification by radio dispatch (paging or telephone) with instructions to report to the designated Evacuation Incident Command Post, located @ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

At the same time the dispatcher will be notifying the State Duty Officer @ (800) 422-0798 of the seriousness of the situation and our decision to evacuate and request added resources.

At the Incident Command Post

* Assignment of Personnel – (Coordinated by Deputy Sheriff on duty) to conduct house to house notification.
* Issuance of evacuation flyers with important information such as evacuation route information, address lists of their assigned properties, maps & etc.
* Teams will also be given durable tags indicating the property has been checked after area evacuated. These will be affixed to address signs.
* Teams shall be made up of two (2) persons. Teams will have radio communication with their supervisors.

1. The Evacuation Check Points are for evacuation near Ely, MN: (Estimated time for setup Approximately 2 hours).

* Vermillion Community College gymnasium and other designated facilities where all evacuees should report for data collection and further instructions. It is extremely important that all evacuees report to in order that sufficient information may be obtained to aid in notification to the evacuated areas once declared safe, or for emergency notification as needed.
* Ely Memorial High School Gymnasium
* Ely grade school gymnasium
* Additional locations to be determined as needed
* Because of the limited amount of shelter opportunities in the Ely area, evacuees should plan on having to relocate out of the area in nearby cities.

1. Evacuation Notification Teams (Outside of the BWCAW)  
   (The following is a suggested listing, but is not limited to)

… First Responders … Lake County SAR units

… US Forest Service Personnel … MN DNR Personnel

… Lake County are Fire Dept. … Lake County Sheriff (Off-duty deputies)

Lake County Evacuation Process

The actual evacuation process will be directed by the on duty deputy sheriff in the area being evacuated who will assign team members to conduct the notifications. All areas will be physically checked and cleared. While an area is being evaluated, the road access to that area from county or state highways will be closed off and monitored. Team members will physically check residence by knocking on each resident’s door and verbally informing them of the need to evacuate. When it is determined that there are no occupants present at a given property after checking all out buildings as well, team members will document the fire numbers or addresses of the property and also any residents who refuse to comply with the evacuation order. Whenever possible, transportation will be provided for those unable to drive or are without vehicles.

After a residence has been cleared, a specifically designated visable notice \*this will be used by all members, a white colored tag will be attached to the fire number sign nearest each residence. At locations with no fire number or address sign present, the notice will be attached at the driveway entrance where one would expect a fire number sign to be located. After an area has been determined to have been fully evacuated, the road access to that area will be barricaded and will remain so until there has been official determination that the evacuation notice has been lifted and the area is safe for reentry. If possible reasonable efforts will be made to contact homeowners not available to the evacuation teams.

Estimated time to implement: 3 – 4 Hours depending on specific area of evacuation

1. Fire Evacuation (Inside of the BWCAW)

The actual need for an evacuation inside the BWCAW located in Lake County may be limited depending on size of the area affected. Most likely the treat of wildfire and the need to evacuate will come from a Forest Service pilot or other governmental representative in the area. The evacuation can also be ordered by the Lake County Sheriff, or an on duty Deputy Sheriff who is aware that a wildfire is approaching and threatening habited areas within the BWCAW. The following is a suggested listing of BWCAW Evacuation Personnel for Inside the BWCAW evacuations:

Sheriff’s Deputy on duty Forest Service L.E.

Forest Service Personnel Forest Service Pilots & Dispatchers

Lake County SAR MN State Patrol

MN Dot for assistance with transportation routes

The evacuation of the BWCAW may be limited to Forest Service portage crews advising campers that the yneed to evacuate immediately from the area due to the treat of wildfire. If it becomes necessary to assist campers in evacuating the BWCAW, reasonable efforts will be made to do so, but campers SHOULD NOT totally depend on someone else taking them out of the endangered areas. Campers should be forewarned during the application process by the Forest Service of the potential wildfire threat and the planning each needs to do.

The Forest Service is expected to take the lead role providing transportation to safe areas, and for further transporting to evacuation centers as needed. Lake County personnel will assist with evacuation of the BWCAW and with signage indicating closures. The Forest Service will complete an evacuation plan for the BWCAW area.

1. Public Information Officer

For the purpose of this wildfire evacuation plan, the Lake County Sheriff is the designated representative for any distribution of public information to the media. Only the Sheriff or his named designee will be authorized to provide any releases to the media.

1. Mutual Aid Support:

Depending on the direction of the evacuation and fire,

* Cook County Search & Rescue
* St. Louis County Search & Rescue
* MN National Guard (Estimate up to 50 people in 4-6 hours)
* US Forest Service & MN DNR (lengthy response and depend on available personnel)

1. Fire Department Personnel

Finland Fire & Rescue, Finland, MN

Silver Bay Fire Department, Silver Bay, MN

Two Harbors Fire Department, Two Harbors, MN

Each of the above listed Departments are volunteer, and the availability of personnel full time would be limited. It should be noted however, that in times of need, these volunteers will go above and beyond in making every effort to assist. We anticipate a good volunteer response should the situation dictate.

DRAFT

St. Louis County  
EVACUATION, TRAFFIC CONTROL AND SECURITY PLAN  
Wildfire Operations  
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1. Purpose

The purpose of this plan is to provide for the timely evacuation of St. Louis County residents from affected areas to shelters and other congregate care facilities. The evacuation may be on a large or small scale. This plan addresses the authority to decide to evacuate, protocols for an effective evacuation and the need to treat those affected in an appropriate manner. The control of traffic to, from and within St. Louis County during an evacuation is also addressed.

St. Louis County has a number of shelter and congregate care facilities available for use when necessary. Coordination of shelter services will be managed by the Social Services Department from the County Emergency Operations Center. In coordination with Red Cross, shelters will be opened and staffed as needed.

1. Responsibilities
2. The St. Louis County Sheriff’s Office would be responsible for coordinating any large, small or precautionary evacuation of rural St. Louis County residents that might be required. Evacuation of visitors from the BWCAW be coordinated with the USFS, who will designate the appropriate evacuation routes and notify the visitors. A preliminary decision to evacuate will be made by the Senior Officer on duty, and coordinated with the USFS as needed. The following personnel are to be contacted for coordination/supervisory duty: Sergeant or Lieutenant on duty, Supervising Deputy (each office), Undersheriff, Emergency Management Administrator or Coordinator. The first person reached is responsible for contacting the Sheriff. Prisoners in custody would be relocated and housed according to jail emergency plans on file in the Sheriff’s Office.
3. Within the municipalities in St. Louis County, police or fire department personnel would be responsible for coordinating an evacuation effort.
4. A Sheriff’s Office command trailer will serve as the on scene coordination point for evacuation. The command trailer will maintain communications and coordinate all on scene activities with the EOC.