PRESSRELEASE

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For Immediate Release

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San Mateo County Firefighter Return Home From Detwiler Fire in Mariposa

Firefighters from the Menlo Park and Woodside Fire Protection Districts, Redwood City and Central County Fire Departments along with the San Mateo County Fire (Cal-Fire) who were deployed early Wednesday morning, July 19, 2017 as part of a 5 Fire Engine Type 1 (Heavy) Municipal Agency Strike Team from Southern and Central San Mateo County have returned home along with two other San Mateo County Strike Teams.

In total, 15 Fire Engines and 66 personnel have returned home from the Detwiler Fire that burned 81,550 acres, 63 homes and is now 75% contained. At its peak, 3700 firefighters and 277 Fire Engines were assigned to the fire.

The 22 Fire personnel in the Southern Strike Team were engaged in active structure protection, fire line suppression and back firing operations for 7 days. Strike Team Leader and Menlo Fire Deputy Fire Chief Don Long noted “the fires behavior at times was both erratic and aggressive with fire jumping dozer containment lines and spotting over the top of us, which could be unnerving and dangerous if we weren’t on top of it”.

Of the eight personnel from the Menlo Park Fire District that were deployed to this fire, only two Fire Line Paramedics are still assigned to the incident. Last year the Fire District deployed personnel to 13 fires throughout the State. This fire was its second deployment of the Fire Season.

Fire Chief Schapelhouman said “the State Master Mutual Aid Fire System is the best in the World, everyone gives a little to help each other out and for which they are reimbursed. Last year the Fire District received $660,000 in reimbursement funds to off-set legitimate personnel and equipment costs. We immediately backfill vacant positions so our residents and community don’t see or experience a reduction in their normal service delivery because their safety and protection is our first priority’.

Video from the fire can be viewed at:

https://youtu.be/4NiXhiQtq0g?list=PL1Itxya_mATX6TbqOgJh-TRyimjicLvuM