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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Flagler County firefighters stand ready to assist others with wildfire efforts

April 24, 2017 – In addition to continually monitoring the situation in Flagler County, Fire Rescue firefighters stand ready to assist other counties battling blazes throughout Florida.

Flagler County Fire Chief Don Petito reported to County Administrator Craig Coffey over the weekend that crews are staying in the local area because regional, state and federal resources have already been deployed to the hardest hit region of the state – southwestern Florida.

“When they are needed, we have developed type 1 engine strike teams, and wildland task force teams to handle any request for local or regional assistance,” Petito said.

The Bunnell District of the Florida Forest Service has 13 bulldozers available, and will respond to every fire with two of them, as well as a supervisor to unify the command post. Flagler County FireFlight is currently the only air resource that is available locally.

The Flagler County Sheriff’s Office has pledged local assistance if Flagler County Fire Rescue requests it.

Governor Rick Scott late last week declared a state of emergency statewide.

“There is no sign of significant rainfall in the very near future for our region,” Petito said. “Any new fires will require a roster and catalog of resources, along with an Incident Action Plan to track our work.”

While there is currently no countywide burn ban, it is being considered. The Florida Forest Service stopped issuing any type of burn permits statewide.

Fire officials ask that everyone use extreme caution with flammable materials outdoors.

“There were new starts in Sumter, Lake, Okeechobee and Glades,” Petito said. “Most of these fires have human causes.”

Residents and homeowners should also take a few steps to protect their structures.

Charles Ericksen, Jr.
District 1

Greg Hansen
District 2

David Sullivan
District 3

Nate McLaughlin
District 4

Donald O’Brien Jr.
District 5

The rule of thumb accepted by a variety of fire prevention agencies, including the National Fire Protection Association, is that all flammable within 30 feet of a structure should be removed. This includes stacks of firewood, portable propane tanks and dead, dry vegetation.

For more information, go to www.flaglercounty.org/firewise.

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