

Wildfire imperils Channel Islands species

Stranded sailor's flare starts a record-setting blaze. Rare plants and animals are at risk.

By ALEX WIGGLESWORTH

A wildfire sparked by the flare of a shipwrecked mariner has burned nearly a fifth of Santa Rosa Island and marks what officials called the largest blaze recorded on the island in modern history.

Firefighters ferried in personnel, equipment and pallets of supplies by boat amid gusty winds and rough seas as they raced to save sensitive wildlife, including the continent's rarest species of pine tree. Preservationists were worried the flames could burn through pristine terrain unique to the region.

"It's one of our gems of the California coast," said Michael Cohen, chair of the Channel Islands National Marine Sanctuary Advisory Council. "It looks like it did 100 years ago — it's just untouched."

The fire had burned more than 10,000 acres and was 0% contained.

Flames spread up steep slopes, chewing through island chaparral, along with some grass and brush, said Mike Theune, fire information officer assigned to the incident.

Two historic buildings were destroyed — Johnson's Lee Equipment Shed and the Wreck Line Camp Cabin — along with a storage structure, he said. A helicopter evacuated 11 employees of the National Park Service, which manages the island as part of Channel Islands National Park, on Sunday.

Flames were about a half-mile from the island's stand of Torrey pines — one of just two places in the world where the species grows naturally, Theune said. Firefighters were seeking to contain the fire using pre-existing features such as roads, ridges and trails rather than carving a fire line through the island's sensitive ecosystems, he said.

Each of the Channel Islands has endemic species and subspecies, including island foxes, that are found nowhere else, said Phyllis Grifman, vice chair of the advisory council. "They're kind of known as the Galapagos of [North] America."

Santa Rosa is home to six endemic plants, as well as the island spotted skunk and rare birds, Cohen said. It also has a rich cultural history — North America's oldest definitively dated human remains were found here in 1959, and there are culturally significant Chumash sites, [See Island, A7]



Photographs by SANDY HUFFAKER For The Times
POLICE swarm the Islamic Center of San Diego, top, on Monday in response to a shooting while the center's school was in session. Above, people leave the area.

Three killed in shooting at mosque in San Diego

Two suspects in possible hate crime are found dead

By SALVADOR HERNANDEZ, SUHAUNA HUSSAIN, RICHARD WINTON AND HANNAH FRY

SAN DIEGO — Three people were killed when two teenage suspects opened fire at the Islamic Center of San Diego on Monday morning in an attack that sparked widespread shock and condemnation.

Police swarmed the center after receiving calls of an active shooter and found a crime scene that expanded across several blocks in the area.

According to police, officers arrived within four minutes of the first report. Authorities said two males, 17 and 19 years old, arrived at the center and opened fire.

When officers arrived around 11:45 a.m., they found three adults dead in front of

the center, San Diego Police Chief Scott Wahl said. One of those was the center's security guard, whose actions saved lives, Wahl said.

As officers searched the center, going door to door looking for a gunman, police received additional calls about gunfire several blocks away.

About a half-mile south of the center, a landscaper reported being shot at, [See Shooting, A7]

Carl's Jr. feels bite of high costs

Carl's Jr. began in 1941 as a hot dog cart on the corner of Florence and Central in Los Angeles and grew into one of the region's best-known burger chains. Eight decades later, the now-global chain is struggling in its old neighborhood.

The high costs of doing business in California, festering labor issues, fierce competition and crime have hit the chain hard in Southern California. Its employees are walking off the job in protest over working conditions, and a top franchisee in

Fast-food chain faces pressures that are adding to challenges of doing business in California

By Itzel Luna

the area has filed for bankruptcy protection.

"These guys were first at the party in Southern California," said Chris Rodriguez, co-founder of DealGround, an artificial intelligence platform that tracks commercial real estate. "Now, it's kind of like they're swimming upstream in every lane."

The franchisee who controls 59 Carl's Jr. outlets applied for bankruptcy protection last month, saying he couldn't pay his bills, blam-

City Council progressives backing Bass

Endorsements are aimed at denting left-wing support for challenger Raman.

By NOAH GOLDBERG

Three members of the Los Angeles City Council's progressive bloc are throwing their support behind Mayor Karen Bass in her bid for reelection, dealing a blow to challenger Nithya Raman, their progressive ally on the council.

The council members endorsing Bass — Eunisses Hernandez, Ysabel Jurado and Hugo Soto-Martínez — are all members of the Democratic Socialists of America, as is Raman. The four routinely cast dissenting council votes on increased police spending and creation of new anti-campment zones in the city.

Hernandez and Jurado planned to announce their endorsements of Bass on Tuesday, with each citing Bass' handling of the Trump administration's immigration raids over the summer and her work to reduce homelessness as significant reasons for their support of the mayor.

"When immigrant communities across our city

came under attack, Karen Bass stood up and spoke out. She showed real leadership and conviction," Hernandez, who represents a district stretching from Pico-Union to Highland Park, said in a statement.

Soto-Martínez, who endorsed Bass earlier this year, joined his DSA colleagues with a statement saying he was caught off-guard by Raman's surprise decision to challenge Bass, which she announced just before the filing period closed.

"Even when we disagree, I've never doubted Mayor Bass and her long-standing commitment to the community," Soto-Martínez said.

Raman herself endorsed the mayor's reelection bid two weeks before jumping into the race. Raman said later that her endorsement actually came months before it was officially announced.

Despite being part of the progressive bloc, Raman has tacked more centrist as she runs for citywide office. She now states that the Los Angeles Police Department should maintain its current sworn officer strength, and that, if elected mayor, she wouldn't block council members from enacting anti-campment zones in their districts. Previously [See Endorsements, A7]

Legal fund could aid Trump allies

The Justice Dept. plans over \$1 billion for 'weaponization' victims, raising outcry.

By KEVIN RECTOR AND BEN WIEDER

WASHINGTON — Shortly after attorneys for President Trump moved Monday to dismiss his \$10-billion lawsuit against the Internal Revenue Service over claims it had leaked his personal tax returns, the Justice Department announced that a settlement in the case would be used to create a \$1.776-billion fund for other victims of "weaponization and lawfare."

"The machinery of government should never be weaponized against any American, and it is this Department's intention to make right the wrongs that

were previously done while ensuring this never happens again," acting Atty. Gen. Todd Blanche said in a statement.

Trump has long claimed that the federal government under President Biden went after him and his political allies without justification and in violation of the law.

He has pardoned all of his supporters charged in connection with the Jan. 6, 2021, attack on the U.S. Capitol, along with other political allies, while pressuring the Justice Department to bring cases against his political opponents.

His lawsuit against the IRS had been challenged by Democratic lawmakers, former IRS and Justice Department officials and outside progressive organizations as a blatantly unlawful move by a deeply conflicted president.

It raised questions from [See Fund, A6]

COLUMN ONE

Widow dons anti-cartel mayor's mantle, hat

Killing of vigilante hero in Mexico left wife with an agonizing choice



JUAN JOSE ESTRADA SERAFIN For The Times
GRECIA QUIROZ, center, carrying the hat of her slain husband, is sworn in as mayor of Uruapan, Mexico, days after his death.

By KATE LINTHICUM REPORTING FROM URUAPAN, MEXICO

Grecia Quiroz sometimes felt as if she were married to a superhero.

Most nights, after her husband, Carlos Manzo, tucked their small sons into bed, he donned a bullet-resistant vest, made the sign of the cross and strode out into the night.

The mayor of Uruapan, the capital of Mexico's rich but violent avocado country, Manzo led police down dark alleys in search of kidnapping victims and combed hillsides for cartel training camps. He chased car thieves by helicopter, exchanging gunfire with the suspects below.

Videos of these endeavors appeared [See Mayor, A3]



TURNER A HIT IN MEXICO

Beloved former Dodger emerges as a big tourist draw while bonding with his son as a member of Tijuana Toros, Bill Shaikin writes. SPORTS, B10

U.S. alleges Skid Row voter fraud

A signature gatherer gave people a cigarette or a few dollars to sign up, she says in a plea deal. CALIFORNIA, B1

Musk loses his OpenAI lawsuit

He waited too long in accusing company of betraying vision, judge rules. BUSINESS, A9

Weather

Mostly sunny; warm. L.A. Basin: 82/60. B6

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