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Canyon Fire Burns Over 5,000 Acres, Forcing Thousands to Evacuate in Southern California

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A rapidly spreading wildfire known as the Canyon Fire has scorched more than 5,000 acres across Ventura County and Los Angeles County, prompting mandatory evacuations, a local emergency declaration, and an extensive firefighting effort. The blaze began Thursday afternoon near Lake Piru and moved quickly due to triple-digit heat, low humidity, and strong winds, threatening homes, infrastructure, and power lines.

According to the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection, commonly referred to as Cal Fire, the Canyon Fire was first reported at 1:25 p.m. Thursday near Highway 126 and the community of Castaic. By late Thursday, the fire had spread to

4,856 acres with no containment. As of Friday evening, cooler overnight temperatures allowed firefighters to make progress, bringing containment to 28 percent, though the burned area had expanded to 5,370 acres.

Mandatory evacuation orders remain in effect for areas near Lake Piru and Val Verde, impacting more than 2,700 residents and approximately 700 structures. In addition, around 14,000 people and 4,700 structures are under evacuation warnings, meaning they should be prepared to leave if conditions worsen.

Los Angeles County officials have declared a local emergency to streamline the deployment of resources and aid. County Supervisor Kathryn Barger, who represents the affected district, stressed the importance of following evacuation instructions. “Extreme heat and low humidity in our north county have created dangerous conditions where flames can spread with alarming speed,” Barger said in a public statement Thursday. “If first responders tell you to leave, go without hesitation.”

The wildfire is burning in mountainous terrain south of Lake Piru within the Los Padres National Forest, an area already vulnerable after previous fires. It is also close to Lake Castaic, a popular recreation site that was impacted by the Hughes Fire earlier this year. The location, combined with the region’s dry vegetation and hot weather, has made containment efforts challenging.

Hundreds of firefighters have been working around the clock to gain control of the blaze. Aircraft have been deployed for water drops while ground crews continue to battle flames in steep and rugged areas. Officials say while some progress has been made, conditions remain dangerous, and shifting winds could quickly change the fire’s behavior.

Authorities are urging residents in both evacuation order and warning zones to remain vigilant, stay informed through official channels, and be prepared to leave immediately if necessary. With high temperatures and low humidity expected to continue in the coming days, firefighters anticipate a difficult battle ahead to fully contain the Canyon Fire.