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REGIONAL FIRE AUTHORITY**
INTERNATIONALLY ACCREDITED FIRE AGENCY
Jim Schneider Fire Chief

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

I-5 Brush Fire

Kent, Wash – August 29, 2017 – A large brush fire along northbound I-5 this afternoon threatened but did not burn a neighborhood in the 25500 block of Kent's west hill.

Firefighters from Puget Sound Fire and South King Fire and Rescue were initially dispatched to two brush fires along the freeway at 4:08 pm. Reports of other fires and of homes being threatened brought additional units from throughout south King County.

While several fire units fought the fire along the right shoulder of I-5, others were in the neighborhood above the freeway deploying fire hoses between the homes to protect them from the flames and embers coming over the sound wall that separated the homes from the freeway.

Several homeowners worked in the smoke to protect their property and that of their neighbors. With their invaluable assistance, firefighters were able to keep the flames from reaching any houses. Almost every home that fronted the freeway had large black patches of burned grass in the backyard.

A crash truck from the airport was brought in to assist the firefighters along I-5. The crash truck, which is used to combat aircraft fires, carries several thousand gallons of water and foam onboard. A unique feature of this vehicle is its ability to spray water while moving – something traditional fire engines cannot do.

A major afternoon traffic backup was caused by the fire as the Washington State Patrol shut down lanes to protect firefighters and their apparatus. At one point news agencies reported a backup of over eight miles.

Currently, firefighters are mopping up the few remaining hot spots in backyards and along the freeway. According to a fire investigator, it is highly unlikely that the cause of this fire will ever be found due to the large amount of water that was used to extinguish it.

There were no reported injuries from this fire.

This incident had units from Puget Sound Fire, South King F&R, Valley RFA, Tukwila FD, Medic One, Zone 3 Fire Explorers, Black Diamond FD, Kent Police, the Port of Seattle, and Washington State Patrol.

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