

Small Town Of DeLuz Periled

Full Page of Pictures — a-3

By JIM McVICAR
and ANDREW MAKARUSHKA

Three great brush fires reached across 35,000 acres of northern San Diego County last night. Scores fled from their homes and the rural community of DeLuz was surrounded by flames.

The largest fire started on the Camp Pendleton Marine base yesterday morning, and swept westward. It had blackened 25,000 acres last night and showed no signs of slackening.

A second major fire moved southward from Temecula, burning 5,000 acres and nearing a junction with the big Pendleton blaze.

15 HOUSES BURNED

The third fire was smaller but destructive. It started in Gopher Canyon, swept down on the Mountain Meadows Community north of Escondido, where it burned 15 houses and threatened Lawrence Welk's Country Club Village at Champagne Boulevard for a time yesterday afternoon. By nightfall it had blackened 4,200 acres.

The Gopher Canyon fire jumped U.S. 395 at a number of points and the road was closed yesterday at the junction of State 78 northward to the junction with State 76.

Traffic was routed by way of Vista.

The DeLuz community of some 200 people, an area of citrus and avocado groves and rural residences, was cut off from the world by the flames.

RESIDENTS FLEE

The residents had all fled. Lt. Ross Newsom of the San Diego County sheriff's office said he had counted at least 20 automobiles and trucks moving out of the area on one county road, piled high with household possessions and children.

One of the refugees, Arthur Guy, who lived on Piatt Truck Trail, told of his family's flight.

"The flames were coming right down into DeLuz. We have a ranch with 120 acres of avocados and citrus and about \$15,000 worth of equipment. It is all going to be destroyed."

Guy said they had let their horses loose in hopes they could escape the fire.

JEEP OVERTURNS

His son Douglas, a teenager, exhibited a cut on his leg he suffered when the Jeep he was driving overturned as the family of six was evacuating. The Jeep was abandoned, but the family all escaped to safety.

A handful of residents of nearby Sandia canyon were also evacuated. The fate of their homes was unknown last night.

Only a party of state Division of Forestry firemen stayed behind, in the relative safety of the DeLuz fire station. There they planned to spend the night, surrounded by the fire.

"Hell over the rim," muttered one fireman, as the flames

(Continued on a-2, Col. 4)