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PRESS RELEASE

Update on NEMO's Response to Fires Near San Pedro Columbia

Belmopan, May 20, 2024.

The Ministry of Blue Economy and Disaster Risk Management and the National Emergency Management Organization (NEMO) inform that, as a result of wildfires affecting the community of San Pedro Columbia and adjacent communities in the Toledo District, a proclamation declaring a state of public emergency for the district was signed by the Governor General on May 19.

Over the weekend, Hon. Andre Perez, Minister of Blue Economy and Disaster Risk Management, and Hon. Oscar Requena, Area Representative for Toledo West, visited the area to assess the situation.

The Toledo District Emergency Operations Centre remains on alert and prepared to provide immediate fire-fighting and humanitarian assistance as needed. Teams are in the Toledo District conducting a damage and needs assessment in the affected areas. The Belize Defence Force and firefighters from the Punta Gorda Fire Station joined the community efforts in firefighting and search and rescue operations.

Based on the reconnaissance report, there is currently no immediate fire threat to San Pedro Columbia, Crique Jute, Mafredi, Nah Lum Cah or San Antonio. NEMO will remain in contact with the chairpersons and alcaldes and will continue to monitor the situation over the next few days.

During the fire season, the public, especially schools, churches, statutory bodies, businesses, and government ministries, are advised to continue to review and update emergency preparedness activities and plans.

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