

## VareseNews

### A water “trench” to defend Monte Martica from the (possible) return of fire

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There is a new aqueduct on Monte Martica. In fact, there are two. **They have been built by the men and women of the civil defence on a long and tiring day of waiting.** The waiting was for the *Föhn*, the warm wind that could reach as much as 70 km/h tomorrow on these mountains, that everyone fears might rekindle the fire.

There are still many areas on the mountain, where the hot embers are smouldering. The work of clearing went on throughout the day (**here we explain what was done and why it is important**), but the fire covered 350 hectares, which is impossible to clear completely in 24 hours.

**So, today, people are preparing for the worst (the return of a fire front), by bringing water to the top of Monte Martica,** with what is commonly called a *water chain*. This operation is easy to say, but very difficult to carry out. It is a long chain of tanks, pumps and hoses that bring water up to the top of the mountain to fight the fire. Here, two have been made: one that rises from the peat bog in Ganna, along Path 15, and another that reaches the top, from Valicci. **In total, there are five large tanks, which can hold thousands of litres of water, which are refilled by a network of about 2500 metres of tubes,** which alternate with a series of valves that allow hoses of the forest fire prevention system to be attached also along the paths.

The wind may bring with it another problem, **that of keeping the helicopters and planes on the**

**ground.** If the wind should be too strong, these aircraft will be forced to stay on the ground, and therefore, what has been built today might be the only means of containing the flames.

**So tomorrow, in the worst case scenario, the war against the fire will be fought in the trenches.** “But let’s hope it turns out to be just a large exercise,” say those at the base camp.

di Translated by Alessia Stocco (Reviewed by Prof. Rolf Cook)