

Southwest Area Incident Management Team

TEAM 5 – MARK BERNAL – INCIDENT COMMANDER



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Firefighters continue work to increase containment

Active fire behavior will continue as high winds return and temperatures increase

Morning Update 4/27/2022

Acres: 55,172 acres

Location: North of Ocate NM, approximately 46 miles north of Las Vegas, NM

Containment: 33%

Start Date: Sunday, April 17, 2022

Cause: Human, under investigation

Fuels: ponderosa pine, oak brush and grass

Current Evacuations for Mora and Colfax Counties:

Colfax County - GO- Sweetwater, Rayado, and Sunnyside – remain evacuated. **SET** – Philmont Scout Ranch and Miami. **Ready:** Cimarron. Residents in Colfax County should sign up now for Code Red. This system notifies residents of evacuation status. For notifications, sign up on the Colfax County website:

http://www.co.colfax.nm.us/government/emergency_management.php

Mora County – GO: Los LeFebres and Los Huerros, residents east of County Road 009 and north of NM Highway 120. **Set:** Los Cocas

The Mora and Colfax County Sheriff's Offices are using the [Ready! Set! Go!](#) program for evacuation status that provides information on evacuation and evacuation preparation.

An Evacuation center is set up at Old Memorial Middle School, 947 Old National Rd, Las Vegas; and Colfax County Fairgrounds, 16 Airport Road, Springer.

Livestock: Residents can evacuate livestock to the Colfax County Fairgrounds. If residents from Mora need a place for horses, the Taos Rodeo Grounds is available. Contact: Livestock Inspector Ruben Baca 505-770-1490.

Fire Update: Active fire behavior resumed on the Cooks Peak Fire yesterday. Yesterday, on the north end of the fire, hotshot hand crews worked to reinforce containment lines as aerial resources provided assistance throughout the day. On the eastern side of the fire, wildland fire crews continued to improve hand line and began suppression repair work to include brush chipping, dozer line repair and road grading, where needed. Fire crews completed a successful firing operation through Aguate Canyon, improving containment along the southern perimeter.

Today, ground crews and aerial resources will continue to work steadily to hold the perimeter within the existing footprint, increase containment and perform mop-up operations. Crews will also conduct suppression repair where conditions permit. On the southern end of the fire, crews will continue to monitor and patrol the Gallinas Mesa area and the lines north of Naranjos. Firefighters will continue building direct line where needed and aviation resources will support with potential aerial ignitions, as weather and wind permit. Hand crews on the northern and eastern edge of the fire will continue working to gain access to areas still burning hot due to fuel concentrations within pinyon and juniper stands.

Wildland firefighting tactics will continue to vary with changing fuels, topography and weather. As the region experiences continued breezy to gusty winds and decreased moisture, fuels will dry rapidly, increasing the

potential for active fire behavior. As these drying trends continue, conditions will be conducive for direct and indirect tactics including fire line construction and hand ignition to control fire lines. The use of aerial resources will be based on safe wind conditions.

Weather: Isolated/scattered dry thunderstorms will move across the fire area, accompanied by gusty winds and potential for lightning strikes. Temperatures will range from high 60s to low 70s today. The region will experience an elevated fire threat later in the week as the next Pacific storm system approaches.

Highway Closures: New Mexico Highway 120 is closed from mile marker 26 to 3 miles west of Ocate. NM 21 is closed from mile marker 1, south of Cimarron to mile marker 18 west of Miami. Motorists are advised to delay travel or to seek alternate routes. Visit <https://nmroads.com/mapIndex.html> for additional information.

Smoke: Above average temperatures will combine with an influx of gulf moisture and elevated instability to bring rise to thunderstorms this afternoon. Good air quality conditions are expected today in the area. Some lingering moderate smoke at times. Winds increasing throughout the week. Smoke impacts from other fires may impact the Cimarron and Philmont area. Residents are encouraged to stay informed of potential changes by visiting the interactive smoke map at <https://fire.airnow.gov/>, which allows you to zoom into your area to see the latest smoke conditions.

Fire Restrictions: New Mexico is in a drought. Even a small spark can start a wildfire. Fire restrictions are implemented to help reduce the chance of a wildfire. The New Mexico State Forester has implemented statewide fire restrictions. Smoking, fireworks, campfires open burning and open fires are prohibited. For more information see <https://www.emnrd.nm.gov/sfd/forestry-news/> The Bureau of Land Management, Farmington District has also implemented fire restrictions. Fireworks, campfires, smoking and operating machinery, including off road OHV use are restricted. Visit [Fire Restrictions | Bureau of Land Management \(blm.gov\)](#) for details.

More Information:

Inciweb: <https://inciweb.nwcg.gov/incident/8066/>

New Mexico Fire information: <https://nmfireinfo.com/>

Smoke Outlook: <https://outlooks.wildlandfiresmoke.net/outlook/b335b9f4>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/CooksPeakFireInfo/>

Evacuations: [Mora County Sheriff's Office | Facebook](#)

Information on Calf Canyon Fire:

Phone: 505-356-2636, phone answered from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m.

Inciweb: <https://inciweb.nwcg.gov/incident/8069>