

# Southwest Area Incident Management Team

TEAM 5 – MARK BERNAL – INCIDENT COMMANDER



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## Cooks Peak Fire Containment Increases

Update 5/05/2022

**Acres:** 59,359 acres (based on Infrared Flight)

**Containment:** 97%

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

**Start Date:** Sunday, April 17, 2022

**Cause:** Human, under investigation

**Fuels:** ponderosa pine, oak brush and grass

**This will be the FINAL DAILY UPDATE from Southwest Area Incident Management Team 5 (SWIMT 5) covering the Cooks Peak Fire unless significant fire activity occurs. Information will continue, as necessary, on the Cooks Peak Fire Information Facebook page and InciWeb. The public Fire Information phone lines will also remain open from 8 a.m. - 5 p.m. throughout the weekend. SWIMT 5 wants to express our appreciation to the affected communities for their overwhelming support throughout this effort.**

**Fire Update: Yesterday:** The Cooks Peak Fire showed minimal fire behavior on Wednesday as interior pockets of heat continue to diminish. Progress was made to containment lines along the west side of the fire.

**Today:** Emphasis will be on suppression repair work and patrol and mop-up along existing firelines.. A group of firefighting resources has been assigned to respond to new starts, should they occur. There is not a Red Flag Warning in effect today. Small pockets of smoke may continue to be visible until significant moisture occurs.

A Type 3 Incident Management Team will assume command of the Cooks Peak Fire at 5 p.m. today. Wildland fire crews will continue to patrol and monitor for heat pockets along containment lines. The team will focus efforts on the remaining portion of unsecured fireline along the northwest edge.

**Current Evacuations for Mora and Colfax Counties:** Effective 1 p.m. on Wednesday, May 4, all “Set” evacuations ordered for the Cooks Peak Fire in Colfax County were reduced. The Cooks Peak Fire now has the following evacuation statuses in place: **Ready:** Philmont Scout Ranch Back Country West of State Road 21, Sweetwater, Rayado, Sunnyside and Philmont Scout Ranch Headquarters.

**Mora County** residents previously in the Cooks Peak Fire evacuation footprint may now be under Calf Canyon/Hermit’s Peak evacuation status. Mora county residents should refer to the Mora County sheriff <https://www.facebook.com/moracountysheriffoffice> and Calf Canyon/Hermit’s Peak Fire Information <https://www.facebook.com/santafeNF> for the most current evacuation status. 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.

**Weather:** Today and Friday will begin a warming trend with very dry air moving into the area by Friday afternoon. By the weekend, a large storm system will begin to impact the region with strong gusty winds and another period of critical fire weather likely. This critical weather will likely extend into Monday and Tuesday as well.

**Highway Closures:** New Mexico Highway 120 from mile marker 26 to 3 miles west of Ocate is closed except to local traffic due to fire activity in the area. Motorists are advised to delay travel or to seek alternate routes. State

Road 21 from Polo Ranch to Cimarron is open to local traffic only and remains closed to through traffic. Visit <https://nmroads.com/mapIndex.html> for additional information.

**Aviation Restrictions:** There is a temporary flight restriction over the Cooks Peak Fire. Firefighting aircraft cannot fly if this restriction is violated by any aircraft including drones. This poses a danger to firefighters on the ground by leaving them without aerial support.

**Fire Restrictions:** 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 <https://www.blm.gov/programs/public-safety-and-fire/fire-and-aviation/regional-info/new-mexico/fire-restrictions> for details.

**More Information:**

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

**Inciweb:** Calf Canyon/Hermits Peak: <https://inciweb.nwcg.gov/incident/8069>

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

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

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

**Evacuations:** <https://www.facebook.com/moracountysheriffoffice/>

**Colfax County:** [http://www.co.colfax.nm.us/government/sheriff\\_s\\_department.php](http://www.co.colfax.nm.us/government/sheriff_s_department.php)