



**SOUTHWEST AREA
INCIDENT MANAGEMENT TEAM
TEAM 4 – AARON HULBURD – INCIDENT COMMANDER**



Extreme winds cause rapid growth on the Hermits Peak Fire

April 13, 2022 Daily Update

Acres: 6,276 acres

Cause: Multiple spot fires spread beyond the prescribed fire project boundary

Containment: 10%

Total personnel: 354

Start Date: April 6, 2022

Location: Approx. 12 miles northwest of Las Vegas, NM, Pecos/Las Vegas Ranger District, Hermits Peak/Pecos Wilderness

Fuels: Mixed conifer

Highlights: The Hermits Peak Fire experienced rapid growth throughout the day and night on Tuesday. Largely driven by sustained winds of 50 to 60 miles per hour (mph) with gusts up to 70 mph, the fire spread nearly six miles to the east and northeast. As the fire moved toward Las Dispensas, firefighters worked quickly to prepare the areas around homes and structures to protect them from the advancing fire. Throughout the area, suppression efforts were hampered by the extreme winds that limited options for both firefighting crews and aircraft that were forced to stay grounded. Despite these challenges, firefighters were able to build defenses around the southern, eastern, and northern edges of the fire to shield communities from potential spread.

Operations: Firefighters are continuing to evaluate risks to surrounding communities while focusing on defending homes, structures, and infrastructure. Firefighters are working full day and night shifts to reinforce control lines along existing roads to the east and improve containment along the southern perimeter moving east and north. Crews have successfully prevented the fire from spreading north of the Sapello River corridor, and will continue to focus their efforts on holding the fire in this area and increase defenses around San Ignacio and the fire's eastern edge. Based on wind predictions, firefighters continue to anticipate increased fire activity on all sides of the fire.

Evacuations: The San Miguel County Sheriff's Office has issued several evacuation orders using the Ready, Set, Go! system. The following areas are in **Go** status (i.e., residents should be evacuating): Las Dispensas, Pendaries Village, San Ignacio, Las Tusas, Lone Pine Mesa, Canoncito, La Canada, Manuelitas, Lower Canyon Road in Gallinas Canyon and La Tewa, Chavez, County A3, Southwest Sapello, and Southern Tierra Monte-Canyon. The following areas are in **Set** status (i.e., residents should be preparing for a potential evacuation): Upper Rociada, Rociada, Pendaries Valley East, Penasco Blanco, South Carmen, Northern Tierra Monte-Canyon, Big Pine, Canovas Canyon, El Porvenir, Gallinas, and Trout Springs. An evacuation shelter is available at the Old Memorial Middle School gym located at the corner of Legion and Old National in Las Vegas, NM.

Weather: A strong cold front is bringing much cooler and drier air into the area, carried by brisk northwesterly winds. After a hard freeze this morning, today will be sunny and cool, with high temperatures far below normal. Winds will become more westerly again and continue generally strong, although not as strong as yesterday. A combination of sunshine, very low humidity, and strong winds will keep fire weather conditions elevated. Another Red Flag Warning is in place today with another Hard Freeze Warning for tonight.

Restrictions: The Santa Fe National Forest has issued a closure order to protect public health and safety during fire operations on the Hermits Peak Fire. The full closure order and map are available at <https://www.fs.usda.gov/main/santafe/home>. A temporary flight restriction (TFR) is in place over the area, which includes unmanned aircraft, or drones. More information on the dangers drones pose to wildland firefighting aircraft and personnel on the ground can be found at: www.nifc.gov/drones.

Smoke: Smoke from the Hermits Peak Fire may be visible from Gallinas, El Porvenir, San Pablo, Mineral Hill, San Geronimo, Gascon, Pendaries, Rociada, Mora, Ledoux, Las Vegas, and along the I-25 corridor. Smoke-sensitive individuals and people with respiratory problems or heart disease are encouraged to take precautionary measures. An interactive smoke map at <https://fire.airnow.gov/> allows you to zoom into your area to see the latest smoke conditions.

Fire updates will be posted on [Inciweb](http://inciweb.com), the [SFNF Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/sfnf) and [Twitter](https://twitter.com/sfnf), [SFNF website](http://www.sfnf.gov), and [New Mexico Fire Information website](http://www.newmexicofire.com).

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