

Southwest Area Incident Management Team

TEAM 5 – MARK BERNAL – INCIDENT COMMANDER



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Firefighters continue building line to increase containment

Fire behavior will increase as high winds return and temperatures increase

Morning Update 4/28/2022

Acres: 55,886 acres

Containment: 34%

Start Date: Sunday, April 17, 2022

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

Cause: Human, under investigation

Fuels: ponderosa pine, oak brush and grass

Current Evacuations for Mora and Colfax Counties: There has been no change in evacuation status on the Cooks Peak Fire. **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

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: Yesterday, favorable weather provided wildland crews an opportunity to improve firelines and increase containment on the Cooks Peak fire. Firefighters continued to build direct handline and dozer line in the Urraca Mesa area on the north and northwest portion of the fire where pinyon and juniper stands are holding pockets of heat. Firing operations and direct line were conducted in the southeast area along the Agueje Canyon to reduce pockets of unburned fuel and connect containment lines. Crews were able to tie in more containment line along the southern flank and are patrolling along the southwest edge along the Gallinas Mesa. Crews conducted firing operations in a 30-acre pocket of unburned fuel in the Halls Peak region and worked to increase handline and dozer line in the Duran Meadow area at the northwest edge in mixed conifer stands. Increased winds and some lightning disrupted fire operations during mid-day. Crews were able to resume work as the cells moved away from the area. No new starts were detected on Wednesday.

Today, ground crews and aerial resources will continue to improve firelines to secure firelines, increase containment, and check for hot spots. Crews will also begin to repair impacts from firefighting efforts where conditions permit. Wildland firefighting tactics will continue to vary with changing fuels, topography and weather.

Critical fire weather is expected through Friday. Strong, gusty, and erratic winds will impact firefighting operations and increase the burning potential of already dry fuels. The use of aerial resources will be based on wind conditions.

Weather: A Red Flag Warning has been issued for this afternoon – due to low relative humidity, strong gusty winds, and drought stressed fuels. On Friday, there will be a **dangerous** fire weather day with winds gusts up to 60 mph combined with warm temperatures and low relative humidity.

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: Overall good air quality conditions expected today in the area during the morning. Light moderate haze in the area. Some lingering moderate smoke at times in the Miami area. Winds out of the southwest changing to west southwest. Smoke impacts from other fires may impact the outlook area.

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>