



Cerro Pelado Fire Update Monday, May 2, 2022

Hours: 8 am-8 pm **Phone:** 505-312-4593 **Email:** 2022.CerroPelado@firenet.gov

InciWeb: <https://inciweb.nwcg.gov/incident/8075/>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/2022.Cerropeladofire> **Twitter:** <https://twitter.com/SantafeNF>

COMMUNITY MEETINGS: A public meeting about the Cerro Pelado fire will be held today from 5:30 pm to 6:30 pm at the Los Alamos County Municipal Building, 1000 Central Ave, Los Alamos, NM. Members of the Southern Area Red Team and agency representatives will discuss and answer questions about current progress and planned activities on the fire. The meeting will be available via zoom at the following link: <https://www.losalamosnm.us/cms/One.aspx?portalId=6435810&pageId=18517194>. No passcode is needed to join.

There will be a virtual meeting tomorrow, Tuesday May 5 from 5:30 pm to 6:30 pm. You can join the meeting on Facebook: <https://fb.me/e/1mTocL75l>

Cerro Pelado Fire: The Cerro Pelado Fire, 7 miles east of Jemez Springs, New Mexico, started on Friday, April 22, during an epic wind event. The cause of the fire is under investigation. It is burning in ponderosa pine and mixed conifer trees and brush. The east part of the fire is burning in the fire footprint from the 2011 Las Conchas Fire. The current fire footprint includes forest units that have previously been treated to reduce fire hazard. Three homes were lost in the fire.

Acreage: 22,314 acres **Containment:** 10 % The decrease in containment is due to growth of the fire.

Personnel and Equipment: 466 total personnel; 25 engines, 1 Type 1 hand crew, 8 Type 2 hand crews, 2 Type 2 initial attack crews, 3 helicopters, 8 dozers, 2 ambulances, 1 rapid medical extraction unit and 9 water tenders.

Yesterday: Due to increased fire activity, firefighters worked along Highway 4 on the northwest side of the fire toward the northeast by Cox Ranch. Highway 4 was closed from mile marker 27 to mile marker 59 due to fire activity and firefighters and equipment in the to keep the fire south of Highway 4. The fire breached the primary containment line along Forest Road (FR) 268 near Rabbit Mountain, south of Highway 4. Firefighters improved fireline along FR 289 for containment on the east side of the fire. Firefighters completed the firing operation with aerial ignition on the southwest side of the fire near Peralta Ridge to keep fire intensity low near old growth timber. Two scooper airplanes arrived to assist firefighters. Firefighters continued mop up and patrol on the northwest side of the fire, to the southwest corner and east to Paliza Canyon. Containment increased in the southwest corner of the fire along FR 270. Coordination between the Incident Team and the Jemez Pueblo and Cochiti Pueblo was crucial in identifying strategies for firefighting if the fire moves south. A well-attended public meeting was held at the Cochiti Lake Fire Station. More than 300 people attended.

The Frelove Fire has been returned back to the local jurisdiction of the Valles Caldera National Preserve.

Today: Firefighters will work along the perimeter of the fire today along Highway 4 on the north, FR 266 on the west, FR 270 on the south, and FR 289 on the east to improve firelines. On the northeast corner of the fire,

firefighters will connect firelines on the Forest Road (FR) 289 and the Forest Road (FR) 270. Super scooper airplanes may scoop water out of Cochiti Lake to help fight the fire. On the north side of the fire, firefighters will improve firelines along Highway 4 by Cox Ranch. Structure protection will also continue in this area. Air operations will resume at 9 am.

Weather and Fire Behavior: Temperatures will be in the 60s today. Winds out of the west will be 20-25 mph. Fire is expected to move east and north with increased activity where wind and fuels align. On the north side of the fire, south of Highway 4, the fire will back toward the highway. On the southeast side of the fire, heavy pockets of unburned fuel may actively burn, specifically in narrow areas of conifer trees. Fire activity will decrease when the fire reaches rock washes above Cochiti Pueblo, but will continue to move through mixed conifer in the canyon bottoms. West winds may continue to move the fire east toward the Los Alamos National Laboratory. If the fire crosses Highway 4, fire activity will increase in the Valles Caldera due to heavy grass. Large stumps and logs will continue to burn.

Evacuations, Shelter Areas: The communities of Cochiti Mesa and the Peralta Canyon area, including Cox Ranch, remain under a “Go” evacuation status. The Sandoval County Fire Department and Emergency Management will provide updated information on evacuations, as needed. Evacuations for Sierra de Los Pinos remain in “Set” mode, meaning being ready to leave at a moment’s notice. If conditions change and the fire threatens the community again, these areas could return to “Go.”

Air quality: Information on air quality is at New Mexico Department of Health Environmental Public Health Tracking, <https://nmtracking.org./fire>. An interactive smoke map at <https://fire.airnow.gov/> allows you to zoom into your area to see the latest smoke conditions.

Closures: Highway 4 is closed from mile marker 47, 14 miles east of Sierra De los Pinos to mile marker 50, 14 miles west of White Rock to all traffic due to fire activity. Highway 4 is also closed to **non-local traffic** at mile marker 35 (2 miles east of Sierra De los Pinos). Motorists should drive slowly along the highway with headlights on. Fire equipment and firefighters will be traveling along Highway 4 and accessing the fire, especially at intersections with FR 10 and FR 280. If heavy traffic impedes firefighting efforts and endangers firefighter safety. The most updated road closure information can be found here: <https://www.nmroads.com/mapIndex.html>

The Santa Fe National Forest issued a closure order for the Cerro Pelado Firefighter Camp. The camp is along FR 376. Closure Order No. 10-507. The purpose of this Order is to protect public health and safety due to extreme fire danger in the Restricted Area. This Order will be effective on May 1st, 2022, at 6:00 a.m., and shall remain in effect until December 31, 2022, or until rescinded.

The Bandelier National Monument has been closed due to fire activity. Valles Caldera National Preserve remains closed until further notice.

The Santa Fe National Forest issued a closure order restricting public access to the area around the fire. Specifically, all Forest Service lands within an area roughly defined by NM Highway 4 on the west, Valles Caldera National Preserve on the north, Bandelier National Monument on the east, and Zia Pueblo and Santo Domingo Pueblo on the south are closed to the public. Order Number 10-506. <https://www.fs.usda.gov/detail/santafe/alerts-notice/?cid=stelprd3802009>

Fire Restrictions: Stage II Fire Restrictions are in effect for the Santa Fe National Forest, which prohibits building, maintaining, attending or using a fire, campfire or stove including charcoal and briquettes. Smoking is also prohibited except within an enclosed vehicle or building, a developed recreation site or while stopped in an area at least 3 feet in diameter that is cleared of flammable material. For other activities prohibited under Stage II Fire Restrictions, see <https://www.fs.usda.gov/santafe/>. Also, due to ongoing fire threats, Sandoval County will not issue burn permits.

Temporary Flight Restriction: There is a flight restriction on the area over the fire (10 nautical miles southwest of Los Alamos, NOTAM 2/2366). https://tfr.faa.gov/save_pages/detail_2_6919.html. Drones over the fire are also prohibited.