



Cerro Pelado Fire Update Monday, May 9, 2022

Hours: 8 a.m. - 8 p.m. **Phone:** 505-312-4593 and 303-918-4004 **Email:** 2022.CerroPelado@firenet.gov
InciWeb: <https://inciweb.nwcg.gov/incident/8075/> **Twitter:** <https://twitter.com/SantafeNF>
Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/2022.Cerropeladofire>

Acreage: 40,958 acres **Containment:** 11%

Personnel and Equipment: 869 total personnel; 40 engines, 9 Type 1 hand crews, 10 Type 2 hand crews, 5 Type 2 initial attack crews, 9 helicopters, 2 scooper planes, 10 dozers, 1 masticator, 2 ambulances, 1 rapid medical extraction unit and 15 water tenders. 2 Air National Guard helicopters are on standby.

Yesterday: Firefighters were patrolling and monitoring the northwest perimeter of the fire. U.S. Department of Energy masticators continued to grind up burnable vegetation along Highway 4. Highway 4 remained closed from mile marker 34 to mile marker 50 (junction of Hwy 4 and 501). The west side of the fire continued to slowly back towards the constructed firelines along Forest Road (FR) 266. Hand crews used check lines to slow fire growth and keep fire intensities low. There was minimal movement on the south side of the fire due to sparse fuels. The southwest corner of the fire had little movement, advancing only when drainages with timber had fuel to consume. On the eastern side of the fire, the southern portion of FR 289 is still considered a primary line as the fire continues to advance east with 30 mph winds. The spot fire that crossed FR 289 advanced onto the east mesa and slowed due to green grass fuels. Most eastward movement occurred in steep canyons. FR 289 has been prepped and plumbed. Fire operations continued to prep firelines on roads east of FR 289. Super scooper planes and heavy helicopters continued to drop water on the eastern perimeter until high winds prevented further flights around 3:00pm. AM Radio 1610 continued to operate as a public service to give news of firefighting efforts on Saturday. No new structural losses were reported.

Today: Firefighters will continue to work along the perimeter of the fire along Highway 4 on the north, FR 266 on the west, FR 270 on the south. The fire is expected to slowly progress southward, toward containment lines, due to sparse fuels. Masticators will continue to grind vegetation along Highway 4. The north side of the fire is expected to continue backing slowly towards Highway 4.

The east side of the fire will be the major focus of fire operations today due to Red Flag wind conditions and expected west to southwest 35+ mph winds. Firefighters will use hose lines and handlines on the northeast and eastern perimeters. Operations will focus on suppressing the spot fires east of FR 289, connecting and flanking the fire. Fire operations noted the fire has slowed significantly due to green grass on the mesas. Crews and aerial observers will verify and suppress all spots as they are discovered. Air operations will continue to start one hour earlier before winds become too strong to fly. Firefighters will coordinate with the National Park Service for structure protection in Bandelier National Monument and Valles Caldera National Preserve. Structure protection group has continued operations throughout all areas with homes and structures. Fire Operations will coordinate with the Pueblo of Cochiti and their resources, continuing to assess and provide protection for structures in the Cochiti Lake area. Due to extreme conditions, firefighters and line safety officers are using lookouts, communications, escape routes and safety zones (LCES) to protect line personnel. Line safety has been making sure firefighters are rotating out of extreme smoke conditions to help relieve fatigue.

Weather and Fire Behavior: Today's weather calls for a Red Flag Warning due to gusty winds 30+ mph, low relative humidity in the single digits and high temperatures. Weather predictions expect near historic wind levels over the next two

days. Expect creeping and smoldering fire on the north, with active fire near Kitty Lake Dip. On the west side, and that portion of the fire on Pueblo of Jemez, today's wind may push the fire towards Hondo Canyon. Expect backing and flanking fire activity on the south side of the fire with no significant growth. There is potential for rapid fire spread as the fire moves east and southeast, especially if winds align with drainages. Fire potential is still a threat in the east side, with fire potentially moving towards West Mesa. The east side of the fire has the greatest potential for fire growth. The north portion of the fire will continue to back slowly towards containment lines along Highway 4.

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 and Valles Caldera National Preserve remain in "Set" mode, meaning residents should be ready to leave at a moment's notice. These areas could return to "Go" if conditions change and the fire threatens the community again. Jemez Springs, La Cueva and Cochiti Lake area remain in "Ready" status. Los Alamos County has moved into the "Set" evacuation levels as of 8:00 am today.

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 remains closed to all traffic from mile marker 34 to mile marker 50 (at the junction of Hwy 4 and 501) due to fire activity. Fire equipment and firefighters will be working along Highway 4 and accessing the fire, especially at intersections with FR 10 and FR 280. 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 has issued a [closure order](#) for the Cerro Pelado fire area and a second [closure order](#) for the Cerro Pelado Firefighter Camp along FR 376. The purpose of both orders is to protect public health and safety due to extreme fire danger in the Restricted Area. Bandelier National Monument and Valles Caldera National Preserve remain closed due to fire activity until further notice.

Fire Restrictions: [Stage II Fire Restrictions](#) are in effect for the Santa Fe National Forest, which prohibits all campfires and other hazardous activities. 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.