



# **SOUTHWEST AREA INCIDENT MANAGEMENT TEAM**

**TEAM 4 – AARON HULBURD – INCIDENT COMMANDER**



## **Aviation resources aid firefighters on the Bear Trap Fire**

May 19, 2022 Daily Update

**Acres:** 19,148 acres  
**Containment:** 28%  
**Cause:** Undetermined  
**Total Personnel:** 738

**Start Date:** May 1, 2022  
**Location:** San Mateo Mountains, Magdalena Ranger District, Socorro County, NM  
**Fuels:** Pine, Pinyon-Juniper and Grass

**Highlights:** As firefighters continue to gain ground on the Bear Trap Fire, aviation resources are lending support through aerial ignitions, reconnaissance flights, and water bucket drops. Aircraft are used to complement the work completed by firefighters on the ground, working together to implement suppression tactics around the fire. A daily operational briefing video explaining details of the Bear Trap Fire operations can be viewed on the [Cibola National Forest Facebook page](#).

**Operations:** Firefighters have successfully constructed control lines around the majority of the fire area, using a combination of existing roads, firelines constructed with hand tools and dozers, and natural features such as rocky cliffs that prevent fire spread. Once constructed, control lines are reinforced and widened by removing unburned vegetation between the main fire edge and the lines, either by directly cutting and removing the vegetation or by strategically igniting these fuels. In rugged terrain that is difficult to access, firefighters are dropping small spherical ignition devices from helicopters to ignite fuels on the ground. These aerial operations help produce a low intensity fire that moves slowly toward control lines, giving firefighters the time and space to hold the fire within the planned boundary. All of these strategies together help to rob the main fire of fuel, so it is less likely to gain intensity and spread beyond the established control lines. Firefighters continue to monitor fire behavior on all sides, although the bulk of resources have been assigned to the southern area where fire activity is highest. With fire activity decreasing in the north, crews are evaluating areas that may need repair following suppression activities.

**Weather:** Today will be somewhat breezier in the afternoon with winds from the southwest and west. Daytime conditions will remain critically dry with temperatures warmer than normal. Tomorrow will bring a critical fire weather day with increasingly windy, warm, and dry conditions over the fire.

**Closures and Restrictions:** The Cibola National Forest and National Grasslands (NF & NGs) have issued a fire area closure, road and trails closure ([No. 03-0726](#)) to protect public health and safety during fire operations on the Bear Trap Fire. Based on high fire danger and severe fire weather conditions, the Cibola NF & NGs have also implemented Stage 2 Fire Restrictions on the Magdalena Ranger District ([No. 03-0724](#)). Both closure orders and maps are available at <https://www.fs.usda.gov/alerts/cibola/alerts-notice>.

**Safety:** The health and safety of firefighters and the public are always the first priority. Members of the public should stay away from Bear Trap Fire operations. 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 <https://www.nifc.gov/drones/>.

**Smoke:** Smoke from the Bear Trap Fire and other nearby fires may be visible in the areas of Alamo, Datil, Magdalena, Socorro, Winston, and San Antonio, NM. Smoke-sensitive individuals and people with respiratory problems or heart disease are encouraged to take precautionary measures. Information on air quality and protecting your health can be found at the New Mexico Department of Health Environmental Public Health Tracking website: [nmtracking.org](http://nmtracking.org). An interactive smoke map at <https://fire.airnow.gov/> allows you to zoom into your area to see the latest smoke conditions.

Fire updates are posted on [InciWeb](#), [Cibola NF & NGs website](#), [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#) pages, the [NM Fire Information website](#).

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