



Southwest Area

Gila Las Cruces Type 3 Incident Management Team

Incident Commander – Pete Valenzuela



Reconnaissance flights today will provide perspective of entire Pass Fire

Daily Update - May 31, 2023

Acres: 10,508 acres

Location: 40 miles west of Winston, NM

Containment: 0%

Personnel: 150

Start Date: May 15, 2023

Cause: Lightning-caused

Fuels: Timber and grass

Structures Lost: None

Helicopter aerial reconnaissance flights are planned for early today. This provides an opportunity for assessing the condition of the Pass Fire footprint from an “eyes in the sky” perspective. These flights are strategically planned and scheduled for key personnel who have direct involvement and/or leadership in fire operations. This aerial view allows fire managers to see the entire perimeter, current fire behavior, fuel consumption, and burn patterns. If flight conditions are not favorable, the aerial mission will be rescheduled.

Incident Commander, Pete Valenzuela added, “the reconnaissance flights provide an opportunity to see the unburned areas that are in path of the fire, including fuel types. This assessment is used to identify potential areas where the fire’s spread will be allowed to continue or where to strategically and safely take actions in preparation for holding the fire well in advance of its arrival.”

Weather: High temperatures will be near normal, high 80’s with winds increasing this afternoon. A Red Flag Warning in effect for Southwest New Mexico until 9:00 PM today. Conditions are expected to improve after sunset when temperatures decrease and winds become light and terrain-driven. Warm, dry weather is expected to continue through the end of the week. **As Red Flag conditions materialize, fire behavior and fire spread are expected to increase.**

Closures: **There are no road closures at this time**, however firing operations are ongoing over the next few days along Highway 59 as the fire continues to spread under current and favorable fuel and weather conditions. Travelers are asked to be mindful of possible smoke impacts on or near the highway. Please slow down and watch for fire crews and engines working in the vicinity and along the edge of the highway. Firing operations along Highway 59 are expected to continue possibly into the weekend.

Aviation Restrictions: Currently, there is no Temporary Flight Restriction (TFR) in place over the Pass Fire, however, be advised that this could change, should aerial support be needed. A “TFR” restricts non-fire aircraft. **This includes civilian drones.** Unauthorized aircraft in the area can ground firefighting aircraft and hinder firefighting efforts.

Situational Awareness for the Public

INCIWEB is the official site for fire information, visit: <https://inciweb.nwcg.gov>

The “.gov” means it’s official. Before sharing sensitive information, make sure you’re on a federal government site. The site is secure and updated daily.

Go directly to the **PASS FIRE:** <https://inciweb.nwcg.gov/incident-information/nmgf-pass-fire>

Fire Information and Media Line: 720-693-3527/ **Hours:** 8 am – 8 pm