



Pass Fire

Gila National Forest

Incident Commanders

Robert Laeng IC

Pass Fire Update July 2, 2023

Information Phone: 575-388-8211

Hours: 8 am-4:30 pm

Email: Maribeth.Pecotte@usda.gov

Acres: 59,704

Location: 40 miles west of Winston, NM

Containment: 12%

Personnel: 140, 1 Type 1 Helicopter, 2 Type 3 Helicopters

Start Date: May 18, 2023

Cause: Lightning

Fuels: Timber, piñon/juniper and grass

Yesterday, crews held and monitored Friday's hand ignitions along the Iron Trail #771. Today, crews plan to use hand ignitions off of Iron Trail #771 to increase containment around the southeast corner of the fire perimeter if conditions prove favorable. Light winds are desirable for firing operations, to carry smoke up and away. Daily, crews continue to monitor fire activity and effectiveness of past suppression actions in the Indian Creek area and where there is concentrated heat.

A public safety road and trail closure is in effect, including all or portions of several roads and trails that provide access to and within the perimeter of the Pass Fire. These closures include Forest Roads 704 and 4208P in their entirety, and portions of Trails 26, 27, 157, 771, and 772. The area closure and associated map can be found at [Gila National Forest - Alerts & Notices \(usda.gov\)](https://www.usda.gov/gila-national-forest/alerts-notices).

Fire danger is high, and the need for fire restrictions on the Gila National Forest is reassessed daily. If campfires are allowed and weather permits, you must watch your fire at all times, or extinguish it fully when it is not attended. Douse with plenty of water, stir it into the coals, and feel for heat. Extinguished means cold to the touch with your bare hand.

Fire is a normal visitor to the Gila landscape and something with which we all have to cope. Ecosystems here are not only adapted to fire, but dependent on the frequent return of low to moderate intensity fire to maintain healthy forest, watershed, and fuels conditions. Applying a "confine and contain" strategy to the Pass Fire allows fire to play its natural role in fire-adapted forest ecosystems, while protecting private land, infrastructure, and natural resource values at risk.

Weather: Sunny with increasing cloud cover in the afternoon. Highs will be 80 – 86 degrees F in the area of the fire, with east winds of 5 - 10 mph, occasionally gusting to 20 mph shifting to southerly winds in the afternoon. Relative humidity will fall to around 12% during the hottest period of the day. Increased smoke production can be expected today if crews proceed with planned hand ignition operations. Smoke tends to settle into lower valleys during overnight heat inversions. Low elevation smokey conditions may persist during early morning hours, generally lifting with solar heating.

Aviation Restrictions: A Temporary Flight Restriction (TFR) is still in place over the Pass Fire. All non-fire aircraft are restricted. **This includes civilian drones.** Unauthorized aircraft in the area will ground firefighting aircraft, hindering firefighting efforts. If you fly, we can't.

For More Information:

- **Inciweb:** <https://inciweb.wildfire.gov/incident-information/nmgnf-pass-fire>
- **New Mexico Fire Information:** <https://nmfireinfo.com/>
- **Air Quality:** <https://www.airnow.gov>