

Lowline Fire Update

Saturday, July 29, 2023 – 8:00 p.m.

Rocky Mountain Complex Incident Management Team 1

Dan Dallas, Incident Commander

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Information Staffing Hours: 8 a.m. to 8 p.m.



Special Note: Firefighters commonly use a wildland fire suppression tactic known as “burning out.” Fuel breaks or “indirect firelines” are created prior to ignition. The work is done by utilizing a combination of resources such as hand crews, dozers, roads, trails, and natural barriers such as large rock outcroppings and ridgetops. The preparatory work provides firefighters with an opportunity to conduct a controlled ignition and fight wildfires on their terms while meeting operational objectives reducing the risk to structures and other values at risk.

Current Situation: An infrared flight last night provided a more accurate size-up of the Lowline Fire. The fire now stands at 996 acres and is 7% contained. The fire is actively burning in heavy timber with spotting and tree torching. Enough moisture remains in the light fuels to hinder the fire from spreading in the grass and sagebrush.

In **Division A**, firefighters conducted a burnout operation on the east side of Division A. Ignition techniques included the use of a helicopter dropping ping pong shaped spheres, known as delayed aerial ignition devices, over the target area and firefighters with drip torches on the ground. A crew will be in place to patrol the area overnight.

Crews in **Division Z** continued mop up operations to reinforce and hold direct fireline along the southern flank. They also conducted structure assessments and started planning for implementing structure protection around structures.

In **Division Y** a mixture of indirect hand and dozer line construction is occurring along the ridge to the west of the fire. Crews did some preparation work for a possible burnout operation tomorrow.

Division W firefighters worked on constructing indirect fireline in preparation future burnout operations to reinforce those lines and hold the fire from spreading further.

Weather & Fuel Conditions:

It will be mostly cloudy tomorrow with a possibility of some wetting rain and thunderstorm activity over the fire area. Temperatures will remain in the mid to low 80s with a small rise in relative humidity. Potential gusty winds can occur during thunderstorm activity.

Evacuations, Closures, and Fire Restrictions:

Mandatory evacuations are in place in the Squirrel Creek and Mill Creek drainages. For specific evacuation information, see Gunnison County Emergency Management at www.gunnisoncounty.org. You may sign up to receive emergency alerts on your phones or other devices at: <https://bit.ly/3QhZVZg>.

An area, road, and trail closure has been implemented on National Forest System lands near the fire area. For specifics see this link: https://www.fs.usda.gov/Internet/FSE_DOCUMENTS/fseprd1126172.pdf. County Roads in the fire vicinity are barricaded. In the interest of public safety, fire officials ask visitors to be aware of fire traffic and avoid the area.

The BLM Gunnison Field office implemented a temporary closure order to all public use for 978 acres of public land, from Cunningham Gulch north to Mill Creek Road (Gunnison County Road 727) in response to the Lowline Fire, actively burning in Gunnison National Forest about 14 miles north-northwest of Gunnison and 11 miles southwest of Crested Butte in Gunnison County, CO. The order, map and other notices are posted at: <https://www.blm.gov/.../regio.../colorado/southwest-district>.

There are currently no fire restrictions in Gunnison County. Should restrictions be implemented, they will be posted at this site: <https://westslopefireinfo.com/gunnison-county/>.

Wildfires are a no-fly zone for unauthorized aircraft, including drones. **If you fly, we can't.** For more information, visit <http://knowbeforeyoufly.org>.

<p>Lowline Fire Statistics: Size: 996 acres Containment: 7% Total Personnel: 322 Location: 14 mi. NNW of Gunnison, CO Reported: 8:00 am July 26, 2023 Cause: lightning</p>	<p>For More Information: Information Phone: 970-648-4470 (public), 970-765-7123 (media) Email: 2023.lowline@firenet.gov InciWeb: https://inciweb.wildfire.gov/incident-information/cogmf-lowline-fire Facebook: www.facebook.com/GMUGFireInfo</p>
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