

San Juan National Forest

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# Forest Service News Release

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## Two Large Fires Burning on Pagosa Ranger District

### The Bear Creek and Quartz Ridge Fires Saw Substantial Growth Today

**PAGOSA SPRINGS, Colo., August 7, 2023**—Two large fires and several small fires are burning on the Pagosa Ranger District. The two large fires are the Quartz Ridge and Bear Creek. The San Juan Type 3 Incident Management Team (IMT) will be assuming command for both large fires at 6am Tuesday, August 8th. An [InciWeb page](https://inciweb.nwcg.gov/) has been established for both of these incidents for up-to-date information.

[**The Quartz Ridge Fire**](https://inciweb.nwcg.gov/incident-information/cosjf-quartz-ridge-fire), burning approximately three miles into the South San Juan Wilderness, has grown to 558 acres since its discovery August 5th. Its smoke column is very visible from Pagosa Springs and the surrounding area. Firefighters are unable to directly engage the fire due to very steep terrain, its remote location, and firefighter risk associated with working in standing dead and down trees. The Quartz Ridge Fire is expected to remain in a very remote location of the South San Juan Wilderness. Fire managers continue to develop a strategic plan to suppress the fire should it move into terrain more favorable to engagement. In response to fire activity, the Quartz Meadows Road (NFSR#685), the Quartz Ridge Trail (NFST#570) and the Quartz Creek Trail (NFST#571) are closed to the public. The fire will continue to be highly visible to travelers on US Highway 160, Colorado Highway 84, and from the communities of Pagosa Springs, Bayfield, and Durango.

[**The Bear Creek Fire**](https://inciweb.nwcg.gov/incident-information/cosjf-bear-creek-fire), burning approximately 2.5 miles West of the Weminuche Valley, has grown to approximately 150 acres since its discovery August 1st. Direct fire suppression efforts occurred the first two operational shifts but due to increased fire behavior and the presence of dead standing trees, firefighters disengaged in accordance with a comprehensive risk analysis. Fire suppression resources remain in the immediate fire area and are actively monitoring fire progression to the northeast. Numerous additional fire resources have been ordered and will join suppression operations in the coming days. The following Forest Service Trails have been closed in response to fire activity: Little Sand Trail (#591) from Mosca Road, Shaw Creek Trail (#584), and Falls Creek Trail (#673). The fire will continue to be visible from the communities of Pagosa Springs, Bayfield, and the surrounding travel corridors of US Highway 160 and Colorado Highway 84.

For information on fire restrictions, current conditions and recreation opportunities on the San Juan National Forest, call (970) 247-4874, visit the [forest website](http://www.fs.usda.gov/sanjuan/), or follow us on [Twitter](https://twitter.com/SanJuanNF) and [Facebook](https://facebook.com/sanjuannationalforest).

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