



# Little Mesa Fire Update

Sunday, August 13, 2023

**Contact:** Niki Carpenter Public Information Officer (970) 787-2993

**Location:** Approx. 15 miles west, southwest of Delta, CO, Dominguez Escalante National Conservation Area

**Discovered:** July 31, 2023, 11:00 AM

**Cause:** Lightning

**Estimated Size:** 776 acres

**Vegetation Type:** Pinyon, Juniper, sagebrush, grass

**Containment:** 10%

**Total Personnel:** 76

**NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC:** Air operations are being conducted on the Little Mesa Fire. For your safety, please stay out of the Potholes Recreation Area. The helicopters are using this water source for fire suppression.

**Current Situation:** Thanks to the hard work of fire crews, the fire is now 10% contained. Ignitions were performed yesterday by unmanned aircraft systems and by hand to clean up piles of unburnt dead and down fuel in the sage flats, and to strengthen the fire line east of Dry Mesa Rd near the Forest Service boundary. Another attempt will be made for aerial ignitions by helicopter today to secure the fire line along Black Ridge to Black Point. If unsuccessful, crews will continue with hand ignitions to meet objectives. A significant increase in smoke will be observed while ignition operations are performed.

Fire managers are utilizing a confine and contain suppression strategy on the mesa tops (Little Mesa, Dry Mesa, and Black Ridge Mesa) to achieve resource benefits while protecting identified values. Those values are firefighter and public safety, private lands, state lands, cultural sites, and threatened/endangered plants. The resource benefits include improved long-term wildlife habitat and restoration of more natural conditions to fire-dependent landscapes, which will reduce the future likelihood of large, catastrophic wildfires.

**Weather:** Monsoon moisture will keep relative humidities between 15-20%. Scattered showers and thunderstorms will stay mainly over higher terrain north of the fire. The potential for wetting rains will be low over the fire today. Gusty outflow winds and lightning are the primary concern with these storms.

**Evacuations and Closures:** No evacuations have been issued. Temporary road closures in Delta County on Dry Mesa Rd at the intersection with Escalante Rim Rd and on USFS Dry Mesa Rd at Sawmill Mesa Rd junction. The GMUG National Forests have issued a forest closure order for the area around the Little Mesa Fire. Public access to the closure area is limited, visit <https://bit.ly/3YwXNz0> for more information.

**Smoke:** Smoke is visible from surrounding areas and Highways 50, 550, 92, 65, 141 and C37 Road. Go to [fire.airnow.gov](https://fire.airnow.gov) or [colorado.gov/airquality/](https://colorado.gov/airquality/) to get updates on smoke conditions.

**Aviation Safety:** Incident aircraft may be flying over the Little Mesa Fire air space. Fire aviation resources are flying at different altitudes and speeds. Unmanned aircraft systems (UAS) or drones must never fly near wildfires. The only UAS or drones able to fly are agency owned and operated, which have been assigned to work on the wildfire and have communication with air operations. **Remember if you fly, we can't!**

**For updated information follow on these outlets:**

**Inciweb:** <https://inciweb.wildfire.gov/incident-information/coupd-little-mesa-fire>

**Facebook:** @LittleMesaFire

**Twitter:** @SWD\_Fire