



# Little Mesa Fire Update

## Thursday, August 24, 2023

**Contact:** Deana Harms      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:** 4,009 acres      **Vegetation Type:** Pinyon, Juniper, sagebrush, grass  
**Containment:** 40%      **Total Personnel:** 25

**Current Situation:** After two weeks of hard work out on Dry Mesa, fire crews and supervisory staff will get replaced to allow them days off. Yesterday, new crews spent the day getting familiarized with the area and gaining situational awareness about hazards and safety concerns, taking turns so there were always firefighters watching for threats to the fireline. The area received sporadic localized showers, which was a limiting factor in the work that could be completed. When storms move through the area, the resulting lightning, slippery roads, and mud create hazards that force firefighters to take cover in vehicles or under tarps. The Multi Mission Aircraft was able to fly and map the perimeter yesterday. Infrared data showed an increase in acreage due to hand ignition operations on Tuesday to secure the Dry Mesa Road.

With more rain in the forecast through the weekend, crews will spend their time patrolling and monitoring the south side of the fire perimeter, where there is the most heat. After this surge of monsoonal moisture passes, they will have to reassess conditions on the ground. Residual heat is anticipated to remain within the fire area after these storms pass. The long-term goal is to increase containment by performing firing operations off of roads that have been identified as containment lines. By removing the available fuel between the remaining interior heat and the fire lines, confidence can be gained that the fire will not cross the line.

**Weather:** The remnants of Tropical Storm Harold will move through the region bringing widespread showers and thunderstorms. Look for periods of some gusty outflow winds, lightning, and some heavy rain from the strongest showers and storms. Scattered rain showers and isolated thunderstorms are expected in the morning, then rain showers and numerous thunderstorms in the afternoon with an 80% chance of wetting rain over the fire area. Temperatures will be in the high 70's with south winds 5 to 10 mph switching to northwest in the afternoon.

**Evacuations and Closures:** No evacuations have been issued. Temporary road closures are in place in Delta County on Dry Mesa Road at the intersection with Escalante Rim Road and on USFS Dry Mesa Road at Sawmill Mesa Road junction. The GMUG National Forests 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](http://fire.airnow.gov) or [colorado.gov/airquality/](http://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. **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