

Lowline Fire Update

Wednesday, August 2, 2023 – 9:00 a.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.



Current Situation: Overnight, firefighters monitored fire activity to assess movement across established perimeters and observe burning conditions. Today, weather conditions will largely dictate firefighter actions as roads remain wet with slick conditions, and a 50% chance of thunderstorm activity is predicted. Moist conditions are likely to preclude any burning opportunities resulting in firefighter efforts focusing on patrols, mopping up hot spots, and securing fuels capable of rolling and igniting fire outside the perimeter. Despite predicted thunderstorms, minimal moisture is expected. Today begins a warming and drying trend that will increase fire activity each day with possible Red Flag conditions on Saturday. Fortunately, implemented work activities during the last several days' weather reprieve has boosted fire managers' confidence in primary and secondary lines, allowing for a possible containment increase again today.

Division A: Road access and possible lightening activity will continue to be a challenge to firefighters. Where access can be obtained, firefighters will mop up and patrol firelines.

Division Z: Securing and expansion of fireline will continue as firefighters strive to connect with Division Y. On the east side of the division, patchy burning occurred within a string of timber creating potential for reburn when conditions change. Firefighters will mitigate the potential for an unplanned reburn and conduct burning operations today if conditions allow.

Division Y: Additional firefighting resources remain assigned to this division and will work to strengthen firelines and connect them to the division Z break. The risks to firefighters on the northwestern edge near the wilderness boundary continue to be a challenge to navigate due to the remoteness and ridgetop exposure. As a result, fire managers are still working through planning scenarios that also provide for firefighter safety.

Division W: Fire managers continue to evaluate opportunities for contingency lines and will scout as conditions make cross-country travel possible. On sections of fireline where access is possible, patrol, mop up, and line securing will occur.

Division X: This is a new division along the wilderness edge of the fire. Due to the rugged and remote nature and absence of infrastructure values at risk, this division will be unstaffed today. Fire managers will work on developing plans for future actions in the area.

Structure protection preparation work as a contingency will be ongoing; firefighters will install sprinklers and assess defensibility where it isn't completed.

Weather & Fuel Conditions:

A 50% chance of precipitation is forecast with minimal to no moisture anticipated across much of the fire. Humidity will be in the low 40% range and temperatures in the low 70s with light winds up to 10mph. Gusts up to 25mph are possible in conjunction with thunderstorm activity. Today and tomorrow will see some lingering moisture although by Friday precipitation chance will be close to zero with afternoon winds increasing. While weather is moderated, so is potential for fire activity and spread. However, as fuels dry out in conjunction with warmer temperatures and lower humidity, active fire behavior is expected, especially in mixed conifer vegetation where dead and down trees are prevalent on steep slopes with strong winds.

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 . BLM has implemented a temporary closure in the fire vicinity. For details see this link: www.blm.gov/programs/public-safety-and-fire/fire-and-aviation/regional-information/colorado/southwest-district . 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.

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: 1693 acres Containment: 38% Total Personnel: 419 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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