



Southwest Area Incident Management Team

TEAM 4 – AARON HULBURD – INCIDENT COMMANDER



Firefighters prepare for oncoming rains on the Ridge Fire

Daily Update – Tuesday, July 16, 2024

Acres: 3,740

Location: 19 miles east of Glenwood, NM

Containment: 20%

Start Date: 7/4/2024

Personnel: 321

Fuels: Timber, grass, understory

Highlights: Fire activity is expected to decrease with incoming rain forecasted today and through the week. Firefighters are completing erosion prevention activities around the fire area, including seeding and installing water bars on constructed handlines and Forest Road 159, and using chipping materials to add mulch to disturbed areas at the fire camp.

Operations: Yesterday, firefighters completed a reconnaissance flight to establish a new perimeter and updated acreage for the fire. As temperatures rose, fire grew with low intensity on the southern and eastern edges. The fire continues to smolder across the basin and creek bottoms, burning through a heavy layer of dead and downed leaf litter. Despite some growth, crews were able to successfully hold their containment lines on Trail #151. Water bars were installed on Forest Road 159 to divert water off handlines in the event of heavy rainfall. Fire crews monitored the northern side of the fire perimeter down into Gilita Creek with an uncrewed aircraft system (UAS) that captures infrared and aerial imagery to help inform strategic planning. Firefighters are using a chipper to cut branches and logs into small wood chips along Willow Creek on Forest Road 159. Crews are hauling the wood chips out of the area to minimize potential debris in Willow Creek. Firefighters expect to complete these chipping operations in Willow Creek by late morning, ahead of predicted rains. Grading will continue along Forest Road 159 to improve road conditions as fire vehicles travel the roadways. Fire activity is still limited to smoldering and creeping, although it is expected to decrease further with the incoming rain. UAS will likely be used again today to provide more information about fire progression in the Iron Creek area where the federally protected Gila trout are located. Deploying the UAS in steep terrain like Iron Creek is a strategic action fire managers use to minimize potential safety risks to firefighters.

Weather: An increase in moisture will result in numerous showers and thunderstorms this afternoon and into the night. Some gusty and erratic winds will occur in the vicinity of thunderstorms. The additional moisture could result in just slightly cooler temperatures than Monday, with slightly higher humidity values.

Smoke: Smoke may be visible from Mogollon, Willow Creek, and Snow Lake. An interactive smoke map at <https://fire.airnow.gov/> allows you to zoom into your area to see the latest smoke conditions. Smoke monitors are in place at the Glenwood Ranger Station, Cliff, and Gila Cliff Dwellings.

Closures: The Gila National Forest has issued an emergency temporary closure of trails and trail segments for the Ridge Fire. The purpose of the closure order is for the protection of firefighters and public health and safety during emergency wildfire suppression activities occurring in and around the trails. The full closure order (No. 03-06-05-24-002) and map are available on the Gila National Forest website at <https://www.fs.usda.gov/gila>.

Safety: The health and safety of firefighters and the public are always the first priority. A temporary flight restriction (TFR) is in place over the area, which includes uncrewed aircraft or drones. Flying drones near wildfires is dangerous for pilots and firefighters and can bring wildfire suppression efforts to a halt. Know before you fly. If you fly, we can't. More information can be found at: <https://uas.nifc.gov/>.

More Information: <https://inciweb.wildfire.gov/incident-information/nmgf-ridge-fire/> / 575-323-8994 / <https://www.facebook.com/GilaNForest> / 2024.ridge@firenet.gov

