



WILLOW FIRE

INCIDENT UPDATE

Thursday, July 23, 2026

Public Information: 719-258-9897

Hours: 8 a.m.–5 p.m.

Email: 2026.willow@firenet.gov

Incident Website: <https://inciweb.wildfire.gov/incident-information/copsf-willow-fire>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/WillowFirePSICC/>

Residents Evacuated: 42

Structures Threatened: 15

Structures Destroyed: 0

Acres Burned: 7,196

Containment: 51%

Start Date: June 29, 2026

Cause: Human

Personnel: 660

Injuries: 14

Hand Crews: 13

Dozers: 5

Helicopters: 4

Water Tenders: 7

Operational Update: Very light rain fell primarily on the Bald Eagle Mountain side of the fire on Wednesday. Thunderstorms produced lightning, requiring firefighters to temporarily disengage from firefighting operations due to safety. Significant rainfall is needed to penetrate the forest canopy and increase fuel moisture. The fire continues to move toward sparse, high-elevation fuels in the Mount Massive Wilderness. Interior fire activity was observed, including isolated torching as unburned islands of vegetation continued to consume. Smoke is still visible due to smoldering near the Fish Hatchery and along the southern end of the fire area. Crews continue to mop up and search for hotspots to extinguish. Firefighters continue building a contingency line in the southwestern portion of the fire. Vegetation is still being chipped in the Halfmoon Creek area. Suppression repair efforts have begun across the fire area, except on primary containment lines.

Weather & Fire Behavior: Northwest winds are expected today, with gusts up to 20 mph. There is a 60% chance of rain this afternoon, and minimum relative humidity is expected to be 45 - 50%. Scattered showers are expected this morning; however, no widespread rainfall is anticipated today. Rain remains in the forecast each day through the rest of the week. If showers and thunderstorm activity develop as predicted today, fire behavior is expected to decrease.

Evacuations: The Lake County Sheriff's Office, in coordination with California Interagency Incident Management Team 8, lifted the pre-evacuation notice for Zones 4A, 4B, 6B, 9, 21D, 22A, 22, and 23. Evacuation Zones 21B, 21C, and 6A are now in pre-evacuation status as of July 20, 2026. Residents should contact the Lake County Sheriff's Office for re-entry information or visit the Lake County website at <https://lakecountyco.gov/599/Willow-Fire>. Zones 6, 21, and 21A remain under Evacuation status.

Road Closures: While forest roads within the fire perimeter are closed to the public, the road closures at the intersections of County Road 10 and 11A, as well as County Road 10 and Highway 24, were lifted on Monday, July 20. Motorists should remain alert for increased fire traffic in the Willow Fire area. An interactive Colorado Department of Transportation road map is available at <https://maps.cotrip.org/>

Forest Closures: The previous Forest Closure Order was reduced in size on Wednesday, July 22. A map of the portion of the Pike-San Isabel National Forest still closed to the public during firefighting operations is available at <https://www.fs.usda.gov/sites/nfs/files/r02/psicc/publication/alerts/02-12-01-26-28%20Reduced%20Willow%20Fire%20closure%20order.pdf>