

Southwest Area Incident Management Team

TEAM 5 – MARK BERNAL – INCIDENT COMMANDER



Public Line: 575-249-1264

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Hours: 8 am – 8 pm

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Crews Construct Fire Line as Red Flag Warning Continues on Black Fire Community meeting scheduled for tonight at 7 p.m. in Truth or Consequences

Daily Update 5/20/2022

Acres: 104,969 acres

Location: 31 miles NW of Truth or Consequences

Containment: 0%

Personnel: 475

Start Date: Friday, May 13, 2022

Cause: Human caused, under investigation

Fuels: Timber and tall grass

Announcement: The public is invited to the community meeting tonight at 7 p.m. at the Ralph Edward Civic Center, 400 West 4th St, Truth or Consequences, NM 87901. It will also be live-streamed on the Gila National Forest Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/GilaNForest>. You do not need a Facebook account to view the meeting.

Fire Update: On Thursday, the Black Fire showed active fire behavior with uphill runs and spotting on the north, east, and south flanks. The fire's east flank exhibited more activity from the evening hours overnight to just before sunrise. Fire personnel continued to actively assess the number of structures threatened.

A Red flag warning remains in effect Friday, with high winds in the forecast. The fire is moving east, northeast, and southeast. Firefighters will focus operations on preparing and constructing direct and indirect control lines and using point protection tactics to protect private property, critical infrastructure, and other values. Hand ignitions are being used to increase fire line depth where needed.

Evacuations: Several areas have been evacuated or are in evacuation readiness. The sheriffs of Grant, Catron, and Sierra counties are using the **Ready, Set, Go** program to notify residents of evacuation status. For detailed information on *Ready, Set, Go! New Mexico*, visit <https://www.emnrd.nm.gov/sfd/fire-prevention-programs/ready-set-go-new-mexico/>.

In coordination with Grant, Catron, and Sierra counties, the following areas are under evacuation status:

GO – Area 2: Encompasses part of Catron and Sierra Counties, including Round Mountain, Diamond Bar Ranch, Me Own Work Center, Links Ranch, Lookout Mountain, and Sugar Loaf Peak

GO – Area 4: Areas in Sierra County, including Hermosa and Mud Spring Mountain **SET** – Area 1 Encompasses parts of Catron and Sierra Counties, including Beaverhead and Poverty Creek

GO – Area 5: Areas in Grant County, including 150 corridor 1.5 south of Tom Moore Trailhead

SET – Area 3: Areas in Sierra County, including Winston and Chloride

SET – Area 6: Areas in Grant County, including the Dispersed area south of Black Canyon Access point along the 150 corridor

READY – Area 7: Areas in Grant County, including 150 corridor Rocky Point CDST and Rocky Canyon Campground

Evacuation maps can be viewed at: <https://inciweb.nwcg.gov/incident/8103/>

Weather: A low pressure system will move out of the Great Basin, causing Red Flag conditions on the Black fire today. Highs will be 78 to 82 with southwest to west winds around 20 mph and gusts up to 35-40 mph. Winds are expected to decrease Saturday with cooler temperatures.

Road Closures: County Road 59, between Beaverhead and the 59/52 junction, and portions of Forest Road 150 (aka North Star Mesa Road or Wall Lake Road). I-25 and other state highways remain open.

Smoke: The Black Fire produces heavy smoke that can be seen from all over the state. The smoke is drifting to the east affecting much of New Mexico before moving northward into Texas. Visit <https://fire.airnow.gov/> for additional information.

Aviation Restrictions: Airtankers, helicopters, water scoopers are assisting firefighters suppression efforts. There is a Temporary Flight Restriction (TFR) over the Black Fire to allow official aviation resources to operate safely. The use of drones by members of the public within a Temporary Flight Restriction is prohibited. Firefighting aircraft cannot fly if any aircraft, including drones, violate the restriction, it also poses a danger to firefighters on the ground by leaving them without aerial support.

Fire Restrictions: The Gila National Forest entered Stage 2 Fire Restrictions at 8 a.m., Thursday, May 19, 2022. Visit <https://www.fs.usda.gov/alerts/gila/alerts-notice/?aid=73002>. The New Mexico State Forester has implemented statewide fire restrictions. Information is available at <https://www.emnrd.nm.gov/sfd/find-current-fire-restrictions/>.

More Information:

Inciweb: <https://inciweb.nwcg.gov/incident/8103/>

New Mexico Fire information: <https://nmfireinfo.com/>

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

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/gilanforest>