



# Gila Las Cruces Type 3 Incident Management Team

MARCUS CORNWELL – INCIDENT COMMANDER



## For Immediate Release:

*Notification for Public Health and Safety*

### Press Release – June 17, 2026 Containment Increases on Bear Fire

**Acres:** 7,769 acres

**Location:** 18 miles southeast of Quemado, NM

**Containment:** 61%

**Start Date:** June 9, 2026

**Personnel:** 495

**Cause:** Lightning

**Summary:** Around-the-clock suppression actions led to a significant jump in containment on the Bear Fire, which did not grow in acreage today. Firefighter's efforts ensured containment lines held when higher temperatures and drier air moved in.

Firefighters continue working to extinguish hotspots along the fire perimeter, reducing the potential for fire to spread. Heavy equipment arrived on the fire to assist with suppression repair efforts.

Red flag critical fire weather conditions are expected today. Smoke originating in pockets of unburned fuel within the perimeter may still be visible from nearby communities even into the evening hours.

**Weather:** Today's forecast shows temperatures in the low 80s and a minimum relative humidity of 10%. Winds are expected to gust up to 30 m.p.h.

**Safety:** A 24-hour Temporary Flight Restriction is also in place. *If you fly, we can't!* The Gila National Forest enacted an [Area Closure Order](#) for the Bear Fire. Along with private dip sites, aircraft are sourcing water out of Quemado Lake. Members of the public should avoid all areas where firefighting operations are occurring.

**Evacuations:** The Catron County Emergency Management Office and Catron County Sheriffs are implementing the Ready, Set Go! method. Three of the identified zones of private land east of the fire, moved into SET status Thursday evening. Residents are encouraged to monitor official updates and be prepared for potential changing conditions.

**Smoke:** Smoke may be visible in and around surrounding communities. Air quality will vary based on fire activity, weather, and wind patterns. Residents should reduce prolonged outdoor activity when smoke is present and check the Air Quality Index before recreating or working outdoors. Sensitive groups should take extra precautions to limit smoke exposure. For real-time smoke conditions, visit <https://fire.airnow.gov>.

**Fire Restrictions:** The Gila National Forest is in Stage 1 Fire Restrictions due to long term severe drought in the Gila region, increased tree mortality across the forest, and forecasted hotter, drier weather conditions. Stage 1 Fire Restrictions limit campfires on forest land to designated recreation sites and campgrounds with constructed metal fire rings. Open burning is also prohibited in the unincorporated area of Catron County and in Catron County Fire District 30.

## For more information:

**Public Information:** [2026.bear@firenet.gov](mailto:2026.bear@firenet.gov)

## Incident Information:

**Facebook:** [www.facebook.com/GilaNForest](http://www.facebook.com/GilaNForest)

**InciWeb:** <https://inciweb.wildfire.gov/nmgnf-bear-fire>

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