



Gila Las Cruces

Type 3 Incident Management Team

MARCUS CORNWELL – INCIDENT COMMANDER



For Immediate Release:

Notification for Public Health and Safety

Press Release – June 19, 2026

Due to Increased Containment, Set Status Lifted for Residences Near Bear Fire

Acres: 7,769 acres

Location: 18 miles southeast of Quemado, NM

Containment: 91%

Start Date: June 9, 2026

Personnel: 298

Cause: Lightning

Summary: Containment on the Bear Fire increased to 91% on Thursday.

A small portion of the fire perimeter on the east flank remains uncontained. Control lines are in place along the fire's edge, and forward progress has been stopped, though some heat remains in this area. Private property located immediately to the fire's east is no longer in imminent danger. Following the recommendation from the Gila Las Cruces Type 3 Incident Management Team, Catron County Emergency Management lifted SET status for residences within zones 2, 3 and 4 as of Thursday, June 18, at 4:45 p.m.

As firefighters strengthen and secure containment lines, crews continue with repair work in areas affected by suppression activities. Firefighters are chipping slash created during suppression efforts and using excavators to repair fire lines created by dozers.

Moving forward, the Gila Las Cruces Type 3 Incident Management Team will share daily Facebook posts about progress on the Bear Fire. The team will provide press releases every other day.

Weather: Friday's forecast shows a max temperature of 84 degrees and northwest winds of 10-15 m.p.h. becoming west southwest 5-10 m.p.h. with occasional gusts to 15 m.p.h. Saturday will bring a high of 80 degrees and dry, breezy conditions. Sunday is expected to be sunny and very dry.

Safety: A 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. The SET evacuation status for zones 2, 3 and 4 were lifted Thursday afternoon. 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

Incident Information:

Facebook: www.facebook.com/GilaNForest

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

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