

San Luis Valley
Bureau of Land Management



San Luis Valley Public Lands



Rio Grande
National Forest



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News Release

--FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE--

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SLV Fire Crew Goes To Alaska

The San Luis Valley Interagency Fire Management Unit sent a 20-person crew to the Railbelt Complex on Sunday. The Railbelt Complex is a 480,000 acre wildland fire located west of Fairbanks.

The SLV crew is categorized as a Type 2 Initial Attack crew, which means it can split into three smaller groups and work three different areas simultaneously. Kent Smith, a Forest Service employee on the Saguache Ranger District is the crew boss, and Devine Haynie, a Forest Service employee on the Conejos Peak Ranger District is the crew boss trainee. The interagency fire crew also includes five sawyers, who are invaluable for removing hazardous trees and cutting fire line through thick brush and forest.

“Our fire-qualified employees are a national resource,” said Jim Jaminet, the fire management officer for the SLV Public Lands Center. “Fire danger in the upper Rio Grande is moderate, so at the moment, we have enough people to adequately cover the San Luis Valley public lands and send a 20-person crew to those drier areas of the country that need help.”

Currently, only 5% of the Railbelt Complex has been contained. The fire grew over 20,000 acres on Monday and the weather forecast is for continued dry, hot weather. The latest updates on the Railbelt Complex can be viewed at <http://www.inciweb.org/incident/1725/>.

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