

Middle Fork Fire Fact Sheet

9/24/2020

Acres: 6,760

Fire Information phone line: 970-724-3027

Incident Commander: Sean Carey, Type 3 IMT

Inciweb: <https://inciweb.nwccg.gov/incident/7153/>

Today's Situation: A red flag warning is in effect today due to warmer temperatures, lower relative humidity, and strong winds. This will keep firefighters on their toes, watching closely for increased fire behavior, while helicopters remain available for action when needed. Incident managers expect the fire to continue its advance through heavy timber along the fire perimeter to the northwest and to the south. A noticeable smoke column is likely during adverse fire weather. Crews continue preparation activities for structure protection and clearing along trails to improve access and as potential indirect holding and firing opportunities. Firefighters' objective is for full suppression of the Middle Fork Fire, while maintaining public and firefighter safety as the highest priority.

Weather: Mostly sunny with highs in the 70s. Relative humidity dropping to 13 - 18%. Southwest winds 10 - 15 mph, gusting to 35 mph in the afternoon. Red flag warning in effect until 8:00 p.m. tonight.

Fire Behavior: High winds today are expected to increase fire behavior with increased torching and small crown run events. Fuels are extremely dry, making them highly receptive to fire. Given the dry conditions, heavy fuels, difficult access, and time of year, the Incident Management Team expects this fire will be active until cooler, wetter weather sets in.

Firefighting Resources: Approximately 89 personnel are assigned to the fire, including four helicopters (two Type 1 and two Type 3) and a fixed-wing air attack to help coordinate aerial operations.

Evacuations: There are no evacuation or pre-evacuation orders in effect. If the fire were to reach any pre-identified management action points, it would trigger Routt County Sheriff's Office to initiate pre-evacuation orders through their reverse-911 system. To sign up for alerts, visit <http://routtcountyalerts.com>. The county provides tips for wildfire preparedness, including planning for pets and livestock, on their website at <http://www.co.routt.co.us/309/Fire-Safety-Tips-for-Rural-Residents>.

Forest Closure: Routt National Forest has issued an area closure. The closure boundary follows Mount Zirkel Wilderness boundary on east. On the south it follows Trail 1132 (Newcomb Creek), Trail 1101 (CDNST), the Wilderness boundary, and Trails 1100 (Swamp Park), 1140 (Saddle), 1140.1A (Saddle Cut-off), and 1171 (Red Dirt). On the west it follows the boundary between National Forest and private lands east of Big Creek from Red Dirt Trailhead to Trail 1176 (Roaring Fork) and continues north along the Wilderness boundary. On the north it follows the North Fork Drainage up to The Dome, east to Lost Ranger Peak, CDNST, and Trail 1131 (Lost Ranger). Trails 1131, 1132, 1166, and 1140 are open. Portion of Trails 1100 and 1171 are open where they follow the closure boundary, closed where they enter the closed area. No roads or trailheads are closed.

Closed trails include:

- Appx. 10 miles of CDNST from 1132 to 1131
- 1130 Rainbow Lake
- 1179 Roxy Ann Lake
- 1099 Ditch Creek
- 1100 and 1100.4A Swamp Park (within Wilderness Area only)
- 1118 Elk Park
- 1168 Luna Lake
- 1168.1 Fish Hawk Lake
- 1170 Chilton
- 1182 Craggs
- 1184 Big Creek Lake
- 1171 Red Dirt past Trail 1140 intersection

Fire Restrictions: Stage 2 Fire Restrictions are in effect in Routt and Jackson counties, on all of the Routt National Forest, and across much of Northwest Colorado.