

Middle Fork Fire Fact Sheet

10/7/2020

Acres: 10,054

Fire Information phone line: 970-439-4725

Incident Commander: Jeramy Dietz, Type 3 IMT

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

Today's Situation: The Middle Fork Fire grew 1,179 acres since the last mapping flight on October 4th; the largest growth since September 26th (739 acre) and still entirely within the Mt. Zirkel Wilderness. Moderate fire behavior is expected today with isolated and group torching in timber and flanking or backing fire along the ground. Currently, the fire is established in the north side of the South Fork Mad Creek bottom. Full suppression tactics are being used, including using helicopters to keep fire growth in check using bucket drops of water to cool the intensity of the torching events and reduce the spread potential of the fire. An additional type two helicopter is joining suppression efforts for the foreseeable future. Fire managers and the National Forest are evaluating the extent of the area closure and are in discussions about adjusting it to reduce impacts to public land users and increase safety of public and firefighters, especially as the fire approaches the previously set management action points. Temperatures are projected above normal through the extended forecasted with low relative humidities, which increases the daily burn timeframe. There will be smoke in the Steamboat Springs area resulting from the Mullen, Cameron Peak and Middle Fork fires.

Weather: Expect sunny skies with highs between 68-73 degrees and relative humidity of 6 - 11%. Winds are out of the west through southwest at 5-10 mph by 1000 with occasional gusts 15-20 mph. Clear night skies with lows between 25-30 degrees and relative humidity of 55-60% and downslope/down valley winds after 8 pm.
<https://continentaldividetrail.org/cdnst-interactive-map/>

Fire Behavior: Mild to moderate with flanking, backing, and isolated/group torching events.

Firefighting Resources: Approximately 69 personnel are assigned to the fire, including four helicopters (two Type 1, one type 2, and one 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.