



South Rim Fire Update – Saturday, July 19, 2025

Rocky Mountain Area Complex Incident Management Team 3
Casey Cheesbrough, Incident Commander

Size: 4,251 acres

Containment: 14 percent

Resources: 6 aircraft | 10 crews | 24 engines | 16 heavy equipment

Total Personnel: 509

Cause: Lightning

Reminder: Blue Mesa Reservoir remains closed west of middle bridge, and Lake Fork Boat Ramp is closed to the launching of boats. Curecanti National Recreation Area is open to the public.

Yesterday: The fire was slowly backing and creeping on the northwest and south sides of the fire. Mop-up continued around the perimeter of the fire as crews continued strengthening constructed firelines on the southern portion of the fire. Helicopters dropped water on areas of heat on the north and south sides of the fire. Crews patrolled the west side of the fire searching for any remaining sources of heat

Current Situation: Firefighters will continue to mop up areas of heat within the fire perimeter on the west and southwest portions of the fire area. Using a combination of handtools and heavy equipment, crews will strengthen firelines on the northwest, west, and southwest portions of the fire area by removing vegetation to eliminate potential sources of fuel and decrease the chance of fire spread. Night and day shift crews will continue to patrol areas where structure protection work has been completed. Aerial resources will continue to assist ground resources in removing heat from the fire perimeter when needed.

When weather and fuel conditions allow, fire managers may begin utilizing strategic firing operations on the northwest side of the fire area. This would be done to remove the threat of an uncontrolled fire moving from the ridgeline or within the canyon to the private lands and structures along Bostwick Rd and K73 Trail.

Strategic firing operations allow fire managers to safely remove fuel at a controlled pace when weather and fuel conditions are appropriate for a lower intensity fire that could limit burn severity. For the South Rim Fire, strategic firing would be completed using an Unmanned Aerial System, or drone, and a piloted helicopter to would allow fire managers to drop ping-pong like balls, filled with potassium permanganate and injected with glycol just before they are released. The chemical reaction within these balls start tiny fires. Utilization of an Unmanned Aerial System, known as a UAS, provides a more localized ignition and significantly decreases the threat to firefighter safety. These systems can also be used at night unlike piloted aircraft.

Weather & Fire Behavior: There will be a lower chance of thunderstorms and lightning than over the past few days. Light winds are forecast out of the west-southwest. High temperatures will be near 80 degrees with relative humidities in the mid-20s higher at 30%. For air-quality and smoke information, go to <https://fire.airnow.gov/#6/39.077/-108.727>.

Evacuations and Closures: Black Canyon of the Gunnison National Park is CLOSED to the public. Hwy 347 is closed at the junction of Hwy 50. Bostwick Park community in Montrose County is under an evacuation notice. Evacuations have also been issued by Montrose County for residences on M73, N73, N74, and O74 roads. Check your address on the Montrose County Sheriff's Office website:
<https://nifc.maps.arcgis.com/apps/instant/basic/index.html?appid=abcd92981ce540f2af4c98c776022661>.

South Rim Fire Information:

Phone: 970-773-5823 (7:00 am to 7:00 pm)

Email: 2025.SouthRim@firenet.gov

Linktree: <https://linktr.ee/SouthRimFireInfo> (or scan the QR code with your smartphone camera)

