



## Pine Gulch Fire Update

August 23, 2020 – 9:30 a.m.

**Rocky Mountain Incident Management Team - Dan Dallas, Incident Commander**

Information Center: (970) 628-0130, 8 a.m. – 8 p.m.

Media Inquiries: (970) 812-3706, 8 a.m. – 8 p.m.

**Special Notes:** There will be a Virtual Community Meeting on Monday, August 24, at 6 p.m. Stay tuned for Zoom log-in information and monitor our social media sites.

**Current Situation:** The dozer line near the Division B/A break on the south side of the fire is holding well. There are still areas of heat and unburned fuel in this area. As winds align, this available fuel may burn near the control line. Aircraft will be utilized to cool the edge or drop retardant as needed to help keep fire west of the dozer line. The rest of Division B remains in patrol and monitor status until the fire moves closer to natural barriers and lighter fuels where firefighters can engage it safely. Crews in Division D are monitoring for fire spread to the west and south and are identifying more natural barriers and indirect options. Structure protection remains in place in Divisions B and D.

Yesterday in Division E, winds increased and pushed the fire back toward itself; columns of smoke were highly visible. Burnout operations in Division E have been very successful. Last night, firefighters utilized the UAS (Unmanned Aerial System) to perform burning operations, bringing fire all the way west on the 266 Road and then south on Hwy 139 to mile marker 22. This was a significant amount of work to accomplish in one shift. The UAS remains the best tool for crews to utilize at night and is a valuable resource in this steep and rugged terrain. Aircraft may be used in Division E today to cool the fire's edge and therefore assist efforts of crews on the ground.

Several heavy equipment operators are working in Divisions F and L to widen and improve roads including the 256 Road and others to the north. Crews continue to scout for more indirect options in Divisions F and L as well as in Division G farther north. More heavy equipment is also being brought into Division K to keep improving control line in the Roan Creek drainage area. The fire's edge in Division K is still holding well all the way into Divisions Z and A where the fire has not progressed east for over ten days.

Night operations are fully staffed, and crews are performing substantial amounts of work overnight. Successful burning operations have required patience and precision, and crews are making significant strides. The Pine Gulch Fire has been able to acquire more resources, including engines and access to more helicopters. There are now over 950 people working on the Pine Gulch Fire.

**Weather & Fuel Conditions:** Today is already cloudy and again has a small chance of thunderstorms with outflow wind potential up to 25 mph. Temperatures remain hot in the low to mid 90s, and relative humidity will be 9-11%. Winds will come from the north and northwest at 7-9 mph with gusts up to 14. The inversion should break around 12 p.m. and could cause rapid changes in fire behavior; the atmosphere remains unstable. Next week will start to bring the chance of some rain showers. Fuels remain very dry with potential for spotting.

**Evacuations:** Garfield County: 4A Ridge Road (256), Salt Wash (205), King Road (258), Clear Creek Road (211), Carr Creek Road (207), Kimball Creek Road (202). A **pre-evacuation** order is in effect for all residents of Garfield County west of CO-139 to the Utah border, and any formerly evacuated residents remain in pre-evacuation. For more information: [www.garfieldcounty.net](http://www.garfieldcounty.net). There are currently no pre-evacuations or evacuations in Mesa County: [www.sheriff.mesacounty.us/FireInformation](http://www.sheriff.mesacounty.us/FireInformation). **Closures:** Roan Creek Road (204) at North Dry Fork (200). The V 2/10 Rd. at the 44 Rd, Coal Canyon Rd. just past the Cameo Shooting Range. The 21 Road north of the BLM boundary, 16 Road at V 8/10 Road, and the Q 5/10 Road is closed at 18 Rd. CO-139 Douglas Pass north of Loma from mile marker 6 to mile marker 39. BLM lands north of Loma, Fruita, Grand Junction, and Palisade. Please see: [www.tinyurl.com/PineGulchBLM](http://www.tinyurl.com/PineGulchBLM)

**Air Quality:** Air Quality Health Advisories may be issued in areas near the Pine Gulch and Grizzly Creek fires. A smoke outlook for the Pine Gulch Fire is available where this update is posted and at <https://fires.airfire.org/outlooks/WesternColorado>. For more information on smoke levels, please visit <https://airnow.gov>.

**Emergency Alerts:** For Garfield County, please visit [garco911.com](http://garco911.com). Mesa County alerts, please visit [bit.ly/Emergency\\_Alerts](http://bit.ly/Emergency_Alerts).

**Temporary Flight Restrictions:** A Temporary Flight Restriction is in place over the Pine Gulch Fire. Wildfires are a No Drone Zone. If you fly, we can't. For more information, visit <http://knowbeforeyoufly.org>.

**Pine Gulch Fire Statistics:**

Size: approximately 129,715 acres  
Containment: 19%  
Total Personnel: 952  
Location: Approximately 18 miles north of Grand Junction, CO  
Reported: July 31, approximately 5:15 p.m.  
Cause: Lightning

**For More Information:**

Information Office: (970) 628-0130, 8 a.m. to 8 p.m.  
Media Inquiries: (970) 812-3706, 8 a.m. – 8 p.m.  
Email: [2020.PineGulch@firenet.gov](mailto:2020.PineGulch@firenet.gov)  
Inciweb: <https://inciweb.nwcg.gov/incident/6906/>  
Facebook: <https://facebook.com/PineGulchFireCO>  
Interactive Fire Map: <https://arcg.is/W0izr>  
Smoke Outlook: <https://fires.airfire.org/outlooks/WesternColorado>

**Resources Include:** 4 Type 1 hand crews, 11 Type 2 hand crews, 6 helicopters, 68 engines, 14 bulldozers, 24 water tenders, and overhead/support personnel