

# West Fork Complex Fire Update



Eastern Great Basin Incident Management Team – Beth Lund, Incident Commander  
Central Coast Interagency Incident Management Team 7 – Mark Nunez, Incident Commander  
East Zone Phone: 719-569-4149  
West Zone Phone: 970-731-2432  
Hours of operation: 8:00 am – 9:00 pm  
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**July 6, 2013**

**9:00 am**

**Special Messages:** Incident Commander Beth Lund of the Type 1 Eastern Great Basin Incident Management Team assumed command of the West Fork Fire East Zone at 6:00 a.m. this morning.

## **Current Situation:**

### **East Zone of the West Fork Complex (Includes Papoose and Eastern Part of West Fork Fires)**

The strategies for operations on the fire include continuing protection for structures and high value resources, as well as confining the fire to areas where it will not pose a threat to local communities during the remainder of the summer.

**Papoose Fire:** Fire activity was minimal, with single trees burning and deep needle litter (duff) continuing to burn. Over the last few days, Papoose has not seen the moisture that West Fork has. The southern end of the fire has crossed the Continental Divide, but acres that burned were minimal (approximately fifteen to twenty acres). Hand line has been constructed south of Red Mountain Ranch to prevent the potential for the fire to spread north back towards Highway 149. Firefighters continue to mop up around structures where heat and smoke continue to be an issue. Burn out operations along some of the meadows near Highway 149 is complete.

**Eastern Part of West Fork Fire:** Thunderstorms over the fire area produced gusty winds and lightning yesterday. The southern part of the fire received nearly 0.75 inches of rain mid-afternoon yesterday. Ash and mud flows will be a concern, but plans are being developed for mitigation. Firefighters will continue fireline construction through the Elk Mountain area and monitor areas along Highway 160 where fire remains active.

### **West Zone of West Fork Complex (Includes Western Part of West Fork and Windy Pass Fires)**

Minimal fire growth occurred last night. Firefighters will continue to patrol and monitor the fire and are poised to respond to any new fire starts that may have occurred during the past few days. Weather permitting, aircraft patrol will continue. There are new starts reported near Shaw Creek and Bear Creek on the western side of Williams Lake Reservoir area. Firefighters will patrol the area to assess the need for initial attack and make a plan.

**West Zone West Fork Fire:** There was very little activity last evening. The West Zone of the West Fork fire is the portion of the fire burning south of the continental divide. Structure protection is still in place for the Wolf Creek Ski Area, Borns Lake Cabins, and Bruce Spruce Resort. The West Fork Campground is open.

**Windy Pass Fire:** Monitoring by air will continue today as well as firefighters continuing to patrol and monitor the fire area.

**Williams Creek Contingency Group:** Firefighters will continue structure protection, patrol and monitor and initial attack new starts.

**Weather:** A better chance of moisture continues to exist as a high pressure system streams over southwest Colorado. Scattered thunderstorms are expected to develop by early afternoon. Sunday will bring a slight increase in the chance of wetting rain. A significant drying trend is expected into the middle of next week.

**Public Health and Safety:** Smoke monitors are in place in Pagosa Springs, Freemon's Ranch, Creede, and South Fork. The monitors are identified as #78 (Creede), #69 (Freemon's Ranch), #25 (South Fork), and #65 (Pagosa Springs). All monitors can be accessed through the map located at: <http://www.wrcc.dri.edu/cgi-bin/smoke.pl>. Times displayed are in GMT – subtract 6 hours to get local time (MDT). For the official Colorado Smoke Outlook, please visit [http://www.colorado.gov/airquality/colo\\_advisory.aspx](http://www.colorado.gov/airquality/colo_advisory.aspx) and <http://www.colorado.gov/airquality/wildfire.aspx> for further health advisory information.

Please use caution when traveling along Highways 149 and 160. Heavy fire traffic can be expected along the highways and within the communities of South Fork, Creede, and Del Norte. In addition, heavy holiday traffic is expected in the same area, and including Pagosa Springs. Please do not stop along the roads to take pictures of the fire or firefighters as doing so could impede fire operations.

**Evacuations and Closures:** Some communities still remain under evacuation, others on pre-evacuation notice. Residents are reminded to remain vigilant and be prepared to evacuate at a moment's notice in the event that fire activity changes. Visit <http://westforkfirecomplex.blogspot.com/> for a list of areas currently under evacuation or pre-evacuation. The list will be updated as conditions change.

For additional information on road and trail closures and fire restrictions affecting the San Juan National Forest go to: <http://www.fs.usda.gov/alerts/sanjuan/alerts-notice>.

For additional information on road and trail closures and fire restrictions affecting the Rio Grande National Forest go to: <http://www.fs.usda.gov/detail/riogrande/>.

**Fire Information Meetings:** None scheduled at this time.

**Media Briefings:** There are no scheduled media briefings.

**Fire Statistics:**

**Location:** 14.5 miles north/northeast of Pagosa Springs, CO

**Complex Size:** 110,028 acres

Windy Pass: 1,417 acres

Papoose: 48,652 acres

West Fork: 59,959 acres

**Start Date:** 06/05/2013

**Percent Contained:** 25%

**Cause:** Lightning

**Total Personnel:** 1,032

**Resources Include:** 6 Type 1 hand crews, 8 Type 2 hand crews, 53 engines, 2 dozers, 16 water tenders, and overhead personnel

**Air Resources:** 6 Type 1 helicopters, 1 Type 2 helicopters, and 1 Type 3 helicopters.

**Places to get information:**

**Blog:** <http://westforkfirecomplex.blogspot.com/>

**Website:** <http://inciweb.nwcg.gov/incident/3436/>

**Twitter:** @rmt1pio

**Facebook:** <https://www.facebook.com/RockyMtn.Type1.IMT.PIOS>.

**Information Boards:** Information is posted at the Pagosa Springs Visitor Information Center, Freemon's Ranch near Creede, the Forest Service office in Creede, and at the Del Norte High School.

**Photos:** <http://s1286.photobucket.com/user/WestForkComplex/library/>

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