

# Northern Rockies – Southwest Area Wildland Fire Management Team



## FACT SHEET

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### Miller Fire Information

Gila National Forest  
Wilderness Ranger District  
Office: (575) 536-2250

## Miller Wildland Fire Update

Thursday, May 12, 2011

Moderate surface fire with occasional torching has increased the fire size to 60,920 acres. Crews began direct line construction northeast of the Gila Cliff Dwellings National Monument to secure the northeast flank of the fire on North Mesa. As weather conditions improved, two heavy helicopters and one medium helicopter were able to conduct water drops to help slow the fire spread north of the Gila River. Mop up operations resumed along the Highway 15 corridor between the Monument and Gila Hot Springs. The human-caused Miller Fire was detected on April 28, 2011, in the Gila Wilderness.

**A Level 2 Evacuation** remains in effect. Residents of Gila Hot Springs were allowed to return to their homes. Residents will need to provide proof of residency, and be ready to leave the area if conditions change.

**Campground Closures:** The following campgrounds off New Mexico Highway 15 remain closed: Upper and Lower Scorpion, Grapevine, Woody's Corral, Forks and TJ Corral.

**What is open:** Lake Roberts Picnic Area, Mesa, Upper End and Mesa campgrounds, and Sapiello Group Area are open to the public. Stage II Fire Restrictions have been implemented across the Gila National Forest. Businesses in the Lake Roberts area also remain open.

**Trail Closures:** Most of the trails west of New Mexico Highway 15, are now closed. This includes: 155 Turkey Creek, 159 Miller Springs, 160 Granny Mt., 403 Brushy Mt., 81 EE Canyon, 162 1000 Mile Ridge, 789 Little Creek Cutoff, 161 Little Creek, 158 Sycamore Canyon, and 177 Cienega.

**Road Closures:** New Mexico Highway 15, at the intersection with New Mexico Highway 35, is closed.

**Smoke** will continue to be visible from Silver City, Cliff, and surrounding areas, especially as fire activity and smoke increases. The Gila River Drainage's should expect to see elevated levels of smoke in the early mornings as smoke settles into the valley. Unhealthy conditions will continue in Gila Hot Springs and at the Gila Cliff Dwellings National Monument. Individuals with existing respiratory or heart conditions are encouraged to take appropriate precautions, as are the elderly or small children. Visit <http://satguard.com/usfs> for *Real Time Data*, and <http://nmfireinfo.wordpress.com/smoke-management/> for information about what individuals can do to protect themselves.

**Stage II Fire Restrictions were implemented on Wednesday, May 11, 2011, at 6:00 a.m. on the Gila National Forest:** *building, maintaining, attending, or using a fire, campfire or stove fire. Smoking, except within an enclosed vehicle or building. Possessing, discharging or using any kind of firework or other pyrotechnic device. Using an explosive. Operating, or using any internal or external combustion engine without a spark arresting device properly installed, maintained, and in effective work order meeting either the Department of Agriculture, Forest Service Standard 5100-1a; or appropriate Society of Automotive Engineers (SAE recommended practice). Chainsaws will not be allowed between the hours of 10:00 a.m. MDT to 9 p.m. MDT Welding or operating an acetylene or other torch with open flame. Possess or use a motor vehicle off National Forest System Roads, except when paring in an area devoid of vegetation within 10 feet of the roadway; and except for parking overnight in developed campgrounds and at trailheads. Violating any state law concerning burning, fire, or which is for the purpose of preventing or restricting the spread of fire.*

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