Black Fire crews respond to lightning starts  
June 25, 2022 Daily Update

**Acres:** 325,133 acres  
**Containment:** 70%  
**Total Personnel:** 491  
**Cause:** Human-caused, under investigation  
**Start Date:** Friday, May 13, 2022  
**Location:** 31 miles northwest of Truth or Consequences, NM  
**Fuels:** Timber and tall grass

**Highlights:** As thunderstorms move across the area, firefighters remain available to respond to any new fires ignited by lightning. One mile south of Highway 152, firefighters spotted and “sized up” a single burning tree named the Drummond Fire. Crews measured the small fire at less than 1/10th of an acre. Firefighters will continue to monitor the smoldering log from the highway, although it is currently showing no movement due to surrounding wet vegetation and ongoing rains.

**Operations:** As firefighters complete their suppression repair tasks, other crews are locating and retrieving miscellaneous equipment, supplies, flagging, and signage from all sides of the fire. Firefighters are working closely with local Resource Advisors to ensure that their repair efforts are meeting the standards established by these specialists. Chipping operations have been delayed in the eastern portion of the fire as the ongoing rains have filled drainages with running water, including Las Palomas and Animas Creek. Crews are working around the Bloodgood Place using excavators on the southern handline while also monitoring and extinguishing any potential heat near Water Canyon. Rain has been patchy with some light showers across the fire area and thunderstorms occurring west of the fire perimeter. With the combination of successful firefighting efforts, increased monsoonal moisture, and completion of suppression repair, many firefighting personnel are being released from the Black Fire to rest and reset at their home units.

**Weather:** Monsoon moisture will result in a daily chance of scattered to numerous showers and thunderstorms from the late morning hours through the mid evening hours. The stronger thunderstorms will be capable of heavy rainfall. Temperatures will remain nearly steady through Monday. Humidity levels will gradually lower into early next week.

**Evacuations:** All evacuations and evacuation preparedness levels have been lifted for communities in Sierra, Grant, and Catron Counties. The real-time, interactive evacuation map has been revised to reflect this change.

**Closures:** The Black Fire Emergency Closure remains in effect on National Forest System lands around the Black Fire area. Additional information is available on the Gila National Forest website. Highway 152 remains open from milepost 40 (Kingston) to milepost 15 (San Lorenzo). Please continue to use caution in the area and be mindful of increased fire traffic.

**Restrictions:** The Gila National Forest lifted all fire restrictions on Friday, June 24. The decision to lift Stage II restrictions was based on several factors, including a favorable monsoonal weather forecast, lesser occurrence of human-caused wildfires, and adequate firefighting staffing. The public can obtain current state and federal fire restriction information across New Mexico at NM Fire Info | Fire Restrictions or NM Forestry Division state-wide fire restrictions.

**Safety:** The health and safety of firefighters and the public is always the top priority. Members of the public should stay away from Black Fire operations. A Temporary Flight Restriction is in place over the Black Fire area, which includes unmanned aircraft, or drones. More information on the dangers drones pose to wildland firefighting aircraft and personnel on the ground can be found at: https://uas.nifc.gov/.

**Smoke:** Smoke has become less visible as rainstorms have moved into the Black Fire area. An interactive smoke map at https://fire.airnow.gov/ allows you to zoom into your area to see the latest smoke conditions.

**Information:** Due to reduced fire activity, daily updates and maps will no longer be posted on information boards located in areas to the east and south of the Black Fire.

Fire updates are posted on InciWeb, the Gila National Forest Facebook and Twitter pages, and NM Fire Information.  
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**Office Hours:** 8:00 AM – 8:00 PM