



Las Conchas Fire North Zone Fire Update

For Immediate Release: July 1, 2011, 8:30 a.m.

Fire Information: 505-428-7735 or 505-216-2685 (Daily from 7 a.m. to 10 p.m.)

Website Info: www.inciweb.org or www.nmfireinfo.com

Twitter: <http://twitter.com/#!/NMFIREinfo/lasconchasfire>

Total Fire Summary	
Date Started: 1 p.m., 6/26/2011	Number of personnel: Approximately 1,201 personnel including six hotshot crews and 25 handcrews
Location: Approximately 12 miles southwest of Los Alamos off NM 4 at mile marker 35	Fuels: Grass, brush, Ponderosa Pine and mixed conifer fuels. Fuel moisture is extremely low
Cause: Unknown – under investigation	Equipment: Four dozers and 52 engines
Size: approximately 103,842 acres	Aircraft: Nine helicopters
Percent Contained: 3%	

- Media should call (505) 428-7739 or (813) 984-3871 to coordinate interviews.
- For information regarding evacuations or the Los Alamos National Laboratory, please call (505) 820-1226.

Community Meetings

Los Alamos County will host daily public meetings at 2 p.m. at the White Rock Baptist Church until further notice.

- **Friday, July 1:**
 - 6 p.m. at the Madonna Parish Hall in Jemez Springs
 - 6 p.m. at the Santa Claran Hotel and Casino in Española. The meeting will be in a large room at the hotel, NOT at the Red Cross evacuation center. Please call the hotel for additional information call (505) 367-4900.

Overview

Area Command Team 1 (Dan Oltrogge, Area Commander) is now managing overall efforts for the Las Conchas and Pacheco Fires. Los Conchas firefighting efforts are divided into two zones: Reinartz's Type 1 Incident Management Team (IMT) is managing the north zone of the fire, and Hughes's Type 1 IMT is managing the south zone.

North Zone Fire Update

Winds will be lighter today and are projected to push the fire eastward. We expect the fire to become active with extreme fire behavior where winds and slope align. Precipitation from yesterday will only improve fuel moistures in the fine dead fuels until the afternoon when fuel moistures will return to conditions seen in previous days. Heavy fuels held the fire overnight; however, mop-up efforts are needed to prevent additional growth. The fire may become plume dominated, with the potential for erratic spreading and spotting in all directions.

North – The fire may continue to progress north and east beyond the 144 road and may align with terrain in the gap between the South Fork and Cerro Grande burn scars. The lighter fuels in these areas will reduce the fire's intensity but remain receptive to spotting. Firefighters plan to conduct burnout operations in the area.

East – Firefighters will continue burnout operations along the Pajarito Ski Area to reduce the likelihood for spotting. Firefighters will be completing line around Los Alamos and looking for opportunities to check the fire's spread in the old Cerro Grande burn.

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South side of north zone – Firefighters will be monitoring the area, checking the fire’s spread as needed, and ensuring heavy fuels are well mopped-up to prevent embers blowing across the line.

West – Firefighters will work on a direct fire line from 4 Road to Valles Caldera 2 Road and prepare the Valles Caldera 4 Road for burnout to help confine the fire’s spread.

Current Evacuations:

City of Los Alamos - The acting Los Alamos County Administrator issued an evacuation order for the city of Los Alamos. The Cities of Gold Hotel in Pojoaque is offering shelter services for evacuated residents of Los Alamos. Los Alamos County officials are working on a plan to recall County employees in preparing to re-open the town site soon. A date to re-open the town site to the general public is yet to be announced.

White Rock is currently under a voluntary evacuation.

The Santa Fe Animal Shelter and Humane Society and the Española Valley Humane Society will be taking in dogs, cats, and other small household pets to help those displaced by the Las Conchas Fire. They are also collecting names for those willing to host animals. For more information, please contact: Santa Fe (503) 983-4309, or Española (505) 753-8662.

The American Red Cross in New Mexico activated two official shelters in northern New Mexico: the Santa Claran Hotel & Casino in Española and the Cities of Gold Casino near Santa Fe. For more information, please contact the American Red Cross at (505) 265-8514 or (800) 560-2302.

Closures

- **NM Hwy 4** is closed at the Jemez Falls Campground and at NM Hwy 501. **NM Hwy 502** westbound into Los Alamos is closed to all motorists. Access is controlled and limited to official traffic until further notification. **NM State Road 126** is closed between MP 5 and MP 38 until further notice. For current conditions, please visit www.nmroads.com.
- The **Santa Fe National Forest and Valles Caldera National Preserve** closed the majority of the Forest and Preserve to all public access. The Coyote and Cuba Ranger Districts North of NM Hwy 96 and West of NM Hwy 550 will remain open.
- The **New Mexico Department of Game and Fish** properties and recreation sites within Pecos Canyon will be closed. Those recreation sites include: Bert Clancey, Terrero, Jamie Koch, Mora River and Monastery Lake.
- **New Mexico State Parks** has closed Hyde Memorial, Fenton Lake, Morphy Lake, Coyote Creek, and Cimarron Canyon State Parks due to extreme fire danger until further notice.
- The **Bureau of Land Management's Kasha-Katuwe Tent Rocks National Monument** is closed to the public. The monument isn't currently threatened, but the road to the monument will be used by firefighters to access the southern flank of the fire.
- **Bandelier National Monument** is closed indefinitely.
- For more information on current fire restrictions and closures on public lands in New Mexico and Arizona, call [1-877-864-6985](tel:1-877-864-6985). You can also visit www.nmfireinfo.com.
- The **Los Alamos National Laboratory** will be closed due to the fire. All laboratory facilities will be closed for all activities, and nonessential employees are directed to remain off site. Employees should check local news sources, the LANL Update Hotline (505) 667-6622 and the LANL web page www.lanl.gov for updates. All radioactive and hazardous material is appropriately accounted for and protected. LANL staff is coordinating the on-site response and supporting the county and federal fire response.

Safety Message

The wildfire and burnout operations will continue to produce heavy smoke. Residents with respiratory problems in the path of smoke may want to consider relocating temporarily until smoke dissipates. Motorists should exercise caution due to reduced visibility. For more information on smoke and your health, please visit <http://nmfireinfo.wordpress.com/smoke-management/>.