

416 Fire Update



Rocky Mountain Incident Management Team - Todd Pechota, Incident Commander
Information Center: 970-403-5326
Hours of operation: 8:00 a.m. – 8:00 p.m.
Website for 416 Fire: <https://www.inciweb.nwcg.gov/incident/5822>
Email: 2018_cosjf_416@firenet.gov

June 15, 2018 (8:00 p.m.)

Special notes: Residents and businesses north from Needles to San Juan County (on both sides of US 550) were able to return to their homes today.

There is a Flash Flood Watch in place for SATURDAY from 9 a.m. until midnight, with rain accumulations up to one inch. 416 Fire leadership is coordinating closely with La Plata County Emergency Services to monitor and plan for this possible situation. Hermosa Creek and Tripp Gulch are particularly susceptible drainages; when an area has burned, soil become hydrophobic, or water resistant, which causes water to rush over soil instead of soak in. Significant amounts of rainfall in short time spans contribute to this situation. Emergency managers are developing a specific flood response plan, and a flood support group is now attached to the fire team. Specialized water rescue teams are already in place should the need arise. Meteorologists from the 416 Fire will monitor weather changes overnight in order to provide advance notice of any developments. Tomorrow, residents may see more emergency service personnel moving into the area in order to prepare for any adverse weather events.

Weather: A Red Flag Warning remains in place until 9 p.m. This evening, there is potential for dry lighting and gusty outflow winds of up to 40 mph. Wetting rains may arrive tonight, persisting through the day on Saturday and lasting for 24 to 48 hours. Temperatures tomorrow will be lows of 44 and highs of 65. Minimum relative humidity will be 30-40% and highs of 90-100% with rain. Winds will be from the southwest at 5-10 mph with gusts up to 20 mph. Sunday may have scattered showers, and Monday will return to dryer conditions.

Current Situation: There is no significant fire activity expected this evening.

Branch I (Divisions H, D, A, E, F, and G): In Division H, the western/northwestern edge of the fire was active today although with less intensity than previous days. Fire here will continue to back down slopes and then grow as it hits drainages or makes small uphill runs. The retardant on the southwest side of the ridge line west of Hermosa has been performing well. Aircraft used water and gel (water enhancer) today to successfully stall the fire on the ridge. Fire managers plan to keep the fire held on the ridgeline and re-assess after the changing weather conditions, thus allowing the most opportune conditions for a burnout operation. There is a possibility the upcoming rain will knock down the fire enough to allow a direct attack. Managers will continue to assess conditions and opportunities.

In Divisions E and F, crews are making good progress on two alternate lines moving west toward the Junctions and Lightner creeks. The work on the 171 road is nearly complete. Firefighters in the Falls Creek and Turtle Lakes areas were chipping today and removing debris that was created during line construction. There is now a spike camp established near Silver Mtn. and approximately 80 hotshot crew members are working in this area. So far, Division G has been scouted only by air and by one Field Observer and one Division Supervisor. Tomorrow, crews will move into Division G and begin tying the line into this area in order to protect Lightner Creek from fire spread.

Division A remains quiet. Crews remain alert for flooding concerns in the drainages here .

Branch III (Divisions X, Y and Z): These three divisions remain quiet except for the area above the cliffs near the Y/Z break south of Electra Lake Rd. Helicopters are successfully keeping the fire held up here with water bucket drops. The line from the 578 road should be complete in the coming day or two.

Division II (Burro Fire): The Burro Fire is producing a separate update. See: <https://inciweb.nwcg.gov/incident/5834/>

Closures and Public Safety: U.S. Highway 550 will be open to escorted traffic from 8 a.m. until 8 p.m. from mile marker 39.5 to 49.5. For up to date information on road closures visit www.cotrip.org. Evacuation statuses may change and evolve. For up to date information, please contact the La Plata County Emergency Operations Center at 970-385-8700 or visit www.co.laplata.co.us.

Smoke and smoke particulate are respiratory irritants. Air quality advisories are in place.
<http://sjbpublichealth.org/416-fire-updates/>

There are still countless recreational opportunities available and southwestern Colorado is open for business. Please see these websites for tourism and recreational opportunities:

La Plata County: <http://co.laplata.co.us/>

Official Durango Tourism site: <https://www.durango.org/>

Durango Business Improvement District <http://downtowndurango.org/>

San Juan County: <http://www.sanjuancountycolorado.us/index.html>

Silverton, CO Chamber of Commerce: <http://www.silvertoncolorado.com/> and other area chambers of commerce

Fire Statistics:

Location: 13 miles north of Durango, CO

Size: 32,959 acres

Total Personnel: 1,124

Resources Include: 11 Type 1 hand crews, 14 Type 2 hand crews, 55 engines, 9 dozers, 2 water tenders

Helicopters: Four Type 1, two Type 2, and two Type 3

Start Date: June 1, 2018

Percent Contained: 20

Cause: Under Investigation