



Southwest Area Incident Management Team

TEAM 5 – Dave Gesser– INCIDENT COMMANDER

Containment increases and suppression repair work begins Daily Update, Wednesday, June 26, 2024

Mescalero Apache Tribe Emergency Operations Center: 575-464-9214

Village of Ruidoso and Lincoln County Emergency Operations Center: 575-258-6900

Fire Information Phone: 575-323-8378 or 575-323-8258

Media Information Phone: 575-323-8053

Phone Line Hours: 8 am – 8 pm

Email: 2024.southfork@firenet.gov

Acres: South Fork – 17,569; Salt – 7,939

Location: South Fork – Ruidoso Area

Salt – 7 mile west of Mescalero, NM

Fuels: mixed conifer, grass, pine/juniper

Start Date: June 17, 2024

Personnel: 949

Containment: South Fork – 64%; Salt – 55%

Resources: The South Fork and Salt fires are currently staffed with 21 crews, 6 helicopters, 54 engines, 8 bulldozers, and 13 water tenders.

Highlights:

An interactive property map is now available for the Village of Ruidoso. An online map is available to assist residents in identifying the status of property access, including properties available for re-entry and those in the No Entry/Exclusion Zones. See “More Information” below for the map link.

Residents and visitors are encouraged to celebrate our Nation’s Birthday, July 4th, without fireworks. We are getting close to celebrating our Nation's Birthday, July 4th. The Mescalero Apache Reservation, Lincoln National Forest and municipal areas have areas that have not received significant rainfall, and fireworks could start new fires. Please celebrate without fireworks this year, so firefighters can complete their efforts to secure the perimeter of the South Fork and Salt fires.

Slow down. Motorists are reminded to slow down while traveling on the Mescalero Apache Reservation. There is still active fire, fire personnel, equipment and utility vehicles along US Highway 70. Help keep firefighters and crews safe by slowing down while traveling through the area.

Fire Activity: On Tuesday, as temperatures increased and fuels dried slightly, several smokes were observed by crews on the South Fork and Salt fires. This activity is the result of unburned and smoldering fuels igniting inside the fire area, including dead and downed trees/debris, snags, and stumps. Potential for these fuels to spread outside the current perimeter is minimal.

A lot of activity is still occurring across the fire area as crews work through structural assessments of buildings impacted by the fire, mop up and begin suppression repair. Cooperators, including utility providers and others are also traveling within the fire area. Area and neighborhood status and conditions are dynamic and will remain that way through the duration of the incident.

Weather: Temperatures will remain in the high 80s. Slow-moving scattered showers and thunderstorms will return in the afternoon, increasing the risk of flash floods and debris flows.

Smoke: Smoke production will remain light to moderate on Tuesday with the highest impacts during the early morning and late evening hours. Additional details are available at <https://outlooks.wildlandfiresmoke.net/outlook/430b2c05>.

Reentry: No evacuations are in place. However, designated "NO ENTRY/EXCLUSION ZONES" remain in place in some areas of the village. Visit <https://www.ruidoso-nm.gov/south-fork-fire> or contact the Village of Ruidoso and Lincoln County Emergency Operations Centers for more information.

Tribal members who have been displaced outside of the Mescalero Apache Reservation due to the fires are strongly encouraged to contact the Tribe's Emergency Operations Center (EOC) to help you and your families get back to the reservation. If you're stranded out of town at other evacuation sites, please call the EOC at 575-464-9214 for more details.

Closures: A South Fork Fire Emergency Closure Order was issued on June 20, 2024, for national forest lands within the Smokey Bear Ranger District. The identified areas, and roads and trails therein, are closed to public access to allow firefighting personnel to work and through the fire area safely. More information is available at www.fs.usda.gov/alerts/lincoln/alerts-notice/?aid=88199.

A Temporary Flight Restriction (TFR) is in place over the fire area. Public/commercial drone flights are also prohibited within this area. If you fly, we may have to ground our air resources. Visit <https://www.tfr.faa.gov> for more information.

More information:

Inciweb: <https://inciweb.wildfire.gov/incident-information/nmmea-south-fork-and-salt>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/SWIMT5>

Smoke Outlook: <https://outlooks.wildlandfiresmoke.net/outlook/430b2c05>

Lincoln County Government: www.lincolncountynm.gov

Mescalero Apache Tribe: <https://mescaleroapachetribe.com>

Village of Ruidoso: www.ruidoso-nm.gov/south-fork-fire

Village of Ruidoso property status map:

<https://ruidoso.maps.arcgis.com/apps/instant/lookup/index.html?appid=e5a6b23bd2934ed192373e9ccbb4aee2>