



**Forest Service**

Kaibab National Forest  
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# News Release

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## Castle Fire's smoke is due to warming trend

**FREDONIA, Ariz., August 12, 2019** — The visible increase in smoke from the Castle Fire is due to the expected warmer and drier trend in weather. Yesterday, the Castle Fire continued to spread into Lookout Canyon generating smoke both from its movement south to the confinement lines and from interior pockets of dead and down vegetation fanned by light winds. These pockets of dead and down fuel will continue smoldering for several weeks or until a significant amount of wetting rain occurs on the fire area.

Fire managers took advantage of ideal weather conditions to widen the lines of confinement using firing operations to stay ahead of the main fire and regulate fire intensities. Overall, fire managers were very pleased with the work accomplished yesterday which included rehab and cleanup of suppression activities from the masticators, dozers and skidders.

The sporadic monsoon patterns have been essential in helping fire managers attain the desired low to moderate fire behavior needed to consume forest litter and dead down vegetation, while protecting stands of ponderosa pine and improving forest health.

Today's weather forecast calls for mostly sunny with no precipitation. The warmer and drier trend is forecasted to continue until Thursday. Under these favorable weather conditions, the Castle Fire is expected to continue its push through Lookout Canyon towards Dugway. Smoke will be visible as fire behavior increases during the peak burning period which is mid-day to late afternoon.

Soon after the Castle Fire started on July 12th, fire managers pre-identified the 19,632-acre planning area where the lightning-caused wildfire would be allowed to fulfill its natural role within a fire-dependent ecosystem. The fire has burned through 92% of the planning area, burning through a significant amount of dead and down trees and some mixed conifer species. By allowing the wildfire to naturally burn through this area, the ecosystem will become healthier and more resilient.

A Closure Order remains in effect for the Castle Fire area: <https://inciweb.nwcg.gov/incident/6439/>





## CASTLE FIRE OVERVIEW

- **Discovery Date:** July 12, 2019.
- **Cause:** Lightning.
- **Location (point of origin):** Approximately 11 miles south of Jacob Lake, 3 miles west of Highway 67, and just east of Forest Road 761 near Oquer Canyon on the North Kaibab Ranger District of the Kaibab National Forest.
- **Current Resources:** One crew, four engines, a helicopter, a dozer, four masticators, two feller bunchers, one skidder, and miscellaneous fire management personnel. Total personnel: approximately 92.
- **Current Size:** About 18,900 acres and it has spread across about 92% of the 19,632-acre planning area.
- **Predicted Smoke Impacts:** Smoke is expected to be visible from both the north and south rims of Grand Canyon National Park, Jacob Lake, Highway 67, Highway 89A, and Fredonia.
- **Current Closures:** Kaibab National Forest managers have implemented a temporary Closure Order for the Castle Fire area in order to provide for public and firefighter safety. For specific information about the Closure Order, please visit: <https://inciweb.nwcg.gov/incident/6439/>
- **Recent and Current Operations:** Wildland fire crews plan to continue improving roads and other designated perimeters within which the fire can move. Current weather conditions may influence the use of firing operations which may be conducted as needed in order to strengthen control lines. A Temporary Flight Restriction (TFR) is in place over the fire area.

Kaibab National Forest information is available through the following sources:

- Castle Fire Inciweb Page: <https://inciweb.nwcg.gov/incident/6439/>
- Kaibab National Forest Website: [www.fs.usda.gov/kaibab](http://www.fs.usda.gov/kaibab)
- Twitter: [www.twitter.com/KaibabNF](https://www.twitter.com/KaibabNF)
- Facebook: [www.facebook.com/KaibabNF](https://www.facebook.com/KaibabNF)
- Flickr: <http://bit.ly/CastleFire2019>

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