



Forest Service

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News Release

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Fire crews work to secure control lines for Castle Fire's continued growth

FREDONIA, Ariz., July 19, 2019 — Wildland fire crews assigned to the Castle Fire on the North Kaibab Ranger District of the Kaibab National Forest continued efforts yesterday to improve established control lines in advance of the wildfire's gradual growth.

The lightning-caused wildfire, which is being allowed to fulfill its natural role in a fire-dependent ecosystem, remains at about 200 acres within a predetermined planning area of 19,368 acres. It is located about 11 miles south of Jacob Lake, 3 miles west of Highway 67, and just east of Forest Road 761 near Oquer Canyon.

Fire managers anticipate that the Castle Fire will continue burning at a low-to-moderate intensity over at least the next several weeks as it moves naturally through mixed conifer stands that will benefit greatly from the reintroduction of fire. Over time, the stands have become overly dense and weakened by insects and disease, resulting in a significant amount of dead and downed trees.

Allowing fire to naturally move across the landscape will not only consume dense fuels on the forest floor but will also replenish nutrients in the soil. This will reduce the risk of future high-severity wildfires and make the remaining trees more resilient.

While the Castle Fire did not grow significantly yesterday, it did slowly back down nearby ridgelines and smolder through heavy fuels. Fire managers expect increased fire behavior over the next few days, as weather conditions in the area are predicted to remain warm and dry.

Tomorrow, wildland fire crews plan to continue improving roads and other designated perimeters within which the fire can move. They are currently focusing efforts along both the northeastern and southeastern boundaries of the planning area.





The Castle Fire poses no danger to structures or other local infrastructure. Smoke impacts have been minimal to date. However, visitors to the North Kaibab Ranger District may notice some localized smoke as they travel near the fire area. Smoke may become more visible over the coming days as fire activity increases.

CASTLE FIRE OVERVIEW

- **Discovery Date:** July 12, 2019.
- **Cause:** Lightning.
- **Location:** 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:** Two crews, six engines, a dozer, a chipper, a water tender, and miscellaneous fire management personnel. Total personnel: approximately 100.
- **Current Size:** About 200 acres within a 19,368-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:** None.
- **Recent and Current Operations:** Wildland fire crews plan to continue improving roads and other designated perimeters within which the fire can move. They are currently focusing efforts along both the northeastern and southeastern boundaries of the planning 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
- Twitter: www.twitter.com/KaibabNF
- Facebook: www.facebook.com/KaibabNF
- Flickr: <http://bit.ly/KaibabNFPhotos>

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