



United States Department of Agriculture

**Forest Service**

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# News Release

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## Castle Fire holding well within confinement lines

**FREDONIA, Ariz., August 16, 2019** -- As hot and dry weather lingers, the Castle Fire is moving through areas of unburned islands of dead and down vegetation that has accumulated over the years. The Castle Fire has been burning with mostly low to moderate fire intensity but holding well within confinement lines. This type of fire behavior will result in improving forest health and wildlife habitat in that area while providing a barrier for future wildfires.

Fire managers on the Type 3 Incident Management Team are anticipating stronger winds today and will closely monitor the Castle Fire to ensure confinement lines remain secure. Crews will continue patrolling the fire daily, performing hazard tree removal, and light rehab work.

Smoke from the Castle Fire has gradually begun to decrease and will continue to decrease each day into the coming weeks or until a wetting rain event occurs. During the peak burning period, which is mid-day to late afternoon, smoke may be visible from surrounding communities and is expected to settle in the valleys during early morning and late evenings then clearing out by mid-morning.

For local air quality and related information, please visit the following websites: [www.airnow.gov](http://www.airnow.gov) or the [Smoke Management Division of the Arizona Department of Environmental Quality](#). Please visit [InciWeb](#) for more information on the Castle Fire and other fires in the area.

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. Better mapping of the pre-identified planning area has indicated a decrease in acreage from 19,632 to 19,368. The fire has burned through 96% 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/>



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## 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:** Four engines and miscellaneous fire management personnel. Total personnel approximately 32.
- **Current Size:** About 19,368 acres and it has spread across about 96% of the 19,368-acre planning area. Small pockets of unburned vegetation remain within the fire's interior and may continue to burn over the coming days.
- **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, Fredonia and Page. Please see [www.airnow.gov](http://www.airnow.gov) for local air quality conditions.
- **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:** Four engines will patrol, hold and monitor the Castle Fire. Hazard trees will be identified and removed as necessary. 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://twitter.com/KaibabNF)
- Facebook: [www.facebook.com/KaibabNF](https://www.facebook.com/KaibabNF)
- Flickr: <http://bit.ly/CastleFire2019>

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