



United States Department of Agriculture

Forest Service

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News Release

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Forest managers pleased with Castle Fire's progress

FREDONIA, Ariz., July 20, 2019 — The lightning-caused Castle Fire grew to 235 acres yesterday, and Kaibab National Forest managers are pleased with the positive effects it is having on the ecosystem.

The wildfire, which is being used by forest managers to meet a variety of resource objectives, is consuming heavy fuel accumulations on the forest floor and is helping ensure the ecosystem will be healthier and more resilient in the future.

The Castle Fire is being allowed to fulfill its natural role in a fire-dependent ecosystem within a defined planning area of 19,368 acres on the Kaibab Plateau. 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.

As it moves across the landscape, wildland fire crews are actively reinforcing existing roads and other barriers that will ultimately confine fire growth to the predetermined boundaries. They do this by removing fuels, such as trees and brush, adjacent to the established perimeters in order to expand the nonburnable area.

Yesterday, wildland fire crews conducted burnout operations along Forest Road 760 to secure the northeastern flank of the planning area. During burn out, firefighters use drip torches to set fire inside an established control line to consume fuel between the edge of the fire and the line. Today, crews will continue preparation work along the eastern edge of the planning area.

Fire managers anticipate that the Castle Fire will continue burning over at least the next several weeks. Weather conditions are predicted to remain largely warm and dry, which should aid in the wildfire's continued gradual growth.

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 as fire activity increases.



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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:** Four crews, eight engines, a dozer, a chipper, two water tenders, and miscellaneous fire management personnel. Total personnel: approximately 145.
- **Current Size:** About 235 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. Burnout operations may be conducted as needed to strengthen control lines.

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](https://twitter.com/KaibabNF)
- Facebook: www.facebook.com/KaibabNF
- Flickr: <http://bit.ly/KaibabNFPhotos>

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