



Forest Service

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News Release

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Castle Fire grows to 3,600 acres within defined planning area

FREDONIA, Ariz., July 28, 2019 — Fire behavior increased on the Castle Fire yesterday, resulting in a smoke column that could be seen from communities in the surrounding area. The consumption of fuels was optimal during the peak burning period, which is normally mid-day to late afternoon.

A combination of hot, dry weather, fuel availability and steep topography contributed to the fire's growth of more than 1,800 acres, bringing the total to 3,600 acres. As the fire backed into steep canyon bottoms, it encountered heavy pockets of fuel, resulting in increased fire behavior. The helicopter used aerial ignitions to strategically ignite fuels, working in tandem with ground forces to lower the fire intensity.

Castle Fire has not received any precipitation and the forecast calls for hotter and drier weather over the next few days. These conditions are favorable as the fire continues to meet restoration objectives by consuming dead and decaying plant material.

Fire managers have identified the 19,632-acre planning area where the Castle Fire can bring positive restorative benefits to the area. Low intensity wildfire can be advantageous by providing an efficient and safe way to remove the dead and decaying plant material that could act as fuel for future forest fires.

When the lightning-caused Castle Fire was first discovered on July 12th, it was located is about 11 miles south of Jacob Lake, 3 miles west of Highway 67, and just east of Forest Road 761 near Oquer Canyon. It is now spreading north and west within the boundaries of the planning area.

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

The Castle Fire poses no danger to structures or other local infrastructure.





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 helicopter, a dozer, a chipper, two water tenders, four masticators, and miscellaneous fire management personnel. Total personnel: approximately 176.
- **Current Size:** About 3,600 acres within a 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.

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/CastleFire2019>

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