



Forest Service

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News Release

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Castle Fire pushes on reaching 15,000 acres

FREDONIA, Ariz., August 6, 2019 — The Castle Fire made another push westward on Monday, resulting in a 3,100-acre gain. The fire's path has covered 15,000 acres within the pre-identified planning area of 19,632 acres. Favorable conditions including dry weather over the western edge of the planning area, available fuels and topography have contributed to the fire's spread.

The Castle Fire started on July 12th and it has been allowed to burn naturally across the landscape. Allowing this lightning-caused fire to burn across the landscape during this time of the year was a strategic decision by fire managers. The fire intensity was mostly low to moderate, with occasional flare ups in dense pockets of fuel.

Under the right conditions, fire helps break down nutrients and minerals in plants and other debris such as old logs and dense undergrowth and restores them to the soil, resulting in a more fertile forest floor.

Firefighters will continue with firing operations and mastication work to ensure that the western and southern perimeters are secure enough to hold the fire. The biggest challenge along Forest Road 226, which is also the western perimeter of the planning area, has been the powerline that exists along this corridor. Firefighters have been working diligently to ensure that any potential for increased fire behavior has been mitigated. This work, coupled with the fire's positive effects on the land will result in long lasting improvements, both ecologically and to existing infrastructure.

Today's weather forecast: partly cloudy then mostly cloudy with a slight chance of thunderstorms in the afternoon.

The fire's origin 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.

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:** Two crews, four engines, a helicopter, a dozer, a chipper, two water tenders, three masticators, two feller bunchers, and miscellaneous fire management personnel. Total personnel: approximately 127.
- **Current Size:** About 15,000 acres and it has spread across about 76% 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
- Twitter: www.twitter.com/KaibabNF
- Facebook: www.facebook.com/KaibabNF
- Flickr: <http://bit.ly/CastleFire2019>

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