



Pack Creek Fire Update

Tuesday, July 6, 2021

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Visit www.utahfireinfo.gov

Start Date	Cause	Size	Percent Containment	Helicopters	Wildfire Modules	Crews	Dozers	Total Personnel
June 9, 2021	Abandoned Campfire	8,952	100%	0	2	0	0	36

Summary:

The Pack Creek Fire is 100% contained. Even though the fire is contained, it continues to burn in the interior. Firefighters continue monitoring the fire, looking for hotspots along the perimeter, addressing hazards, and completing rehabilitation work. Firefighters are working most heavily in Geyser Pass and north of Haystack Mountain. Due to decreased resource needs and incident complexity, the Type 3 Incident Management Team is transitioning to the Type 4 Incident Management Team led by Kathryn Sebes from the Fish and Wildlife Service. This will be the final update unless conditions change.

Please respect private property and the privacy of area residents. Refrain from stopping in the Pack Creek Community. The residents of Pack Creek continue to recover from the impacts of the fire.

The fire managers would like to express their thanks to the community for all of their support. The team would also like to thank the responding fire departments including the Blanding Volunteer Fire Department, Green River Fire Department, La Sal Volunteer Fire Department, Moab Valley Volunteer Fire Department, Monticello Volunteer Fire Department, and Thompson Springs Volunteer Fire Department as well as our local partners including Grand and San Juan County Sheriffs and their departments, Grand County EMS, Rocky Mountain Power, local government entities, Grand County Water and Sewer, and others from around the state who supported firefighting efforts. Your contributions were invaluable.

Conditions:

While fire activity is minimal, the fire continues to burn in the interior and, as conditions dry out, Moab residents and visitors may continue to see smoke throughout the summer. Spot fires will likely cause isolated smoke columns and continue to burn in the areas closed to public access. These small fires have a low likelihood of spreading and will help clean out light fuels from the forest understory.

Evacuations Lifted:

As of today Tuesday, July 6, 2021, all remaining private property evacuation orders associated with the Pack Creek Fire have been lifted by the San Juan County Sheriff. This includes private property in and around the area east of Geyser Pass on La Sal Mountains, from Blue Lake down through Dark Canyon Area. However Geyser pass road from Trans La Sal Trailhead on the west side of the closure and to the upper geyser pass trailhead (Whole Enchilada) on the east side of the closure will be closed. All of the Oowah Lake road will remain gated, locked and closed. Oowah campground will be closed.

Forest Closure:

The forest closure for parts of the western slope of the La Sal Mountains is still in effect. We appreciate the continued support from the public and ask that you continue to stay out of the area for firefighter and public safety. The Manti-La Sal National Forest is planning to update the closure for National Forest lands to allow for increased access. When available,



the updated forest information will be posted on the Manti-La Sal Forest website at: www.fs.usda.gov/mantilasal.

Soil Burn Severity Map:

Burned Area Emergency Response (BAER) team finalized the Soil Burn Severity map for the Pack Creek Fire. The soil burn severity is categorized by 4 levels: unburned, low, moderate, and high. BAER soil scientists used satellite images to prioritize places in the field to assess soil burn severity. The team sampled sites to evaluate soil changes caused by the fire. They collected information on ground cover, canopy consumption, intact roots, and water repellency to better understand soil burn severity. The analysis showed soil burn severity (noted in acres):

- Unburned: 820 acres (9%)
- Low: 3,722 (40%)
- Moderate: 4,586 (49%)
- High: 151 (2%)

BAER post-fire assessment teams use the soil burn severity data to identify risks to human life and safety, property, and critical natural and cultural resources from increased soil erosion, accelerated surface water run-off, and debris flows. This information helps the BAER team determine areas where potential emergency stabilization treatments may be needed to reduce risk.

The team prepared the attached Soil Burn Severity map. The Soil Burn Severity map isn't an erosion risk map, but does help define areas where potential increases in the rates of erosion and run-off are expected from steep hillslopes with high and moderate soil burn severity. Areas located downstream from moderate and high soil burn severity may experience increased rates of erosion, debris flows, and surface run-off following short-duration, high-intensity rainfall events.

Other Information:

The Temporary Flight Restriction (TFR) over the fire area has been lifted and normal flight operations in the area can resume.

Investigators are still seeking leads to help identify those responsible for the fire's ignition. Anyone who has information related to the identification of the responsible party of the Pack Creek Fire can call the tip line at 775-355-5337.

As of June 25, public and state lands are in stage 2 fire restrictions in Carbon, Emery, Grand and San Juan counties. Stage 2 restrictions mean campfires are not allowed on public or state lands. Learn more on the Utah Fire Information website: <https://utahfireinfo.gov/active-fire-restriction-documents/>.