

News Release

GROUND AND AERIAL IGNITIONS TAKING PLACE TODAY ON 412 FIRE

-Smoke will be more visible as a result-

NOTICE: Attached, please see new attached map, which includes suggested trail reroutes (call or email for larger PDF format, if needed)

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: DOLORES, Colorado – 10:30 a.m., June 28, 2017 – Ground ignitions began again this morning on the 412 Fire in the Ryman Creek area of the Dolores Ranger District about seven miles south of Rico, and aerial ignitions will be added mid-day. Fire officials are carefully managing the fire, which was caused by lightning on Friday, June 23, to allow it to play its natural role in the ecosystem to provide for long-term health and integrity of the forest. The wildfire is burning in heavy dead and downed trees in steep and rugged terrain at 10,000 feet in elevation approximately five miles east of the Roaring Fork Trailhead within Montezuma County.

“Smoke from the fire will be more visible, as we expect significant acreage growth as a result of today’s operations,” said Patrick Seekins, Dolores District Fire Management Officer. “Our plan is for measured reintroduction of fire to remove heavy fuel accumulations across this remote area within the predetermined boundaries we set up in advance.”

Smoke is expected to be visible from Colorado Highway 145 at time. Travel restrictions are posted on area roads, along with roadside signs alerting the public to fire operations. Night-time smoke may settle downslope in valleys to the south and west along Highway 145 in the Dolores River Canyon.

A Type 3 Incident Management Team is in place with 65 total fire personnel currently assigned, including the Columbine Wildland Fire Module, Storm Peak Wildland Fire Module, Craig Hotshots, four engines, one water tender, a fire prevention officer and various support personnel. The San Juan Hotshots will join the effort on Friday. Aerial ignitions are being handled by a helicopter from Northern Colorado Helitach mounted with a plastic sphere dispenser, which releases plastic spheres over targeted areas. The plastic spheres contain potassium permanganate and are injected with ethylene glycol before being discharged. A chemical reaction causes the spheres to ignite approximately 20 to 30 seconds after injection.

Concurrently, ground crews will continue burnout operations to contain the fire within predetermined boundaries along existing forest roads, trails and natural barriers, such as green meadows. These operations are expected to continue, as weather conditions allow, into the future. Meanwhile, fire officials are conducting patrols in the Roaring Fork drainage along Forest Road #435 to the east and north along Forest Road #564 to Scotch Creek along Forest Road #550. Undeveloped private land lies five miles downslopes to the west, but there are numerous natural barriers that will limit fire spread to the west.

Current Closures (please see map):

- The Highline Colorado Trail between its intersections with the Clear Creek Trail (#547) and Hotel Draw Road (#550).
 - Big Bend Trail (#519), Salt Creek Trail (#559) in the Hermosa Creek Wilderness
 - Roaring Fork Road (#435)
 - Scotch Creek Road (#550.1) and Hotel Draw Road (#550)
 - Divide Road (#564)
 - Corral Trail #521
 - Salt Creek Trail, 733
 - Ryman Creek Trail 734/735
-

-USDA-

USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer, and lender.