



San Juan National Forest

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News Release

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Back burning to begin on the West Guard Fire, a part of the Plateau Fire Complex

DOLORES – Back burning to secure West Guard Fire containment lines in the Plateau Fire Complex using aerial ignition will begin today at 12:30. Additional smoke will be visible from Hwy 491, Dove Creek and Cortez.

The Plateau Fire Complex is composed of two lightning caused fires approximately 13 miles apart. The West Guard Fire is currently burning in Ponderosa pine, oak litter and grass. This fire is located just west of the Glade Guard Station approximately 5 miles west of Benchmark Lookout, in Dolores County.

The Plateau Fire is burning off the rim of Plateau canyon in steep rugged terrain in a mixed conifer fuel type. The fire is located about 14 miles north northeast of the Town of Dolores within Dolores County.

Resources on site include U.S. Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management crews. A full suppression indirect strategy is being implemented for fire fighter safety on both fires. Currently 2 fire modules composed of 10 firefighters each, and a Boulder Type Two, 20 person hand crew is working the fire along with four fire engines and one Ute Mountain Ute helicopter. Recent rains and firefighter tactics will ensure that burnout operations will achieve low to moderate intensity fire behavior.

Closures for the Plateau Fire Complex are in place and the public is asked to respect any signage related to road closures for their personal safety. Roadside signs will be posted alerting the public to fire operations. Additional closures for the Burro Fire continue to be in effect.

As these fires progress, there is a chance that smoke may settle at night in the town of Dolores, Dolores River Canyon near the overlook and the surrounding area.

To report a new fire on federal lands, please contact the Durango Interagency Fire Dispatch Center at (970) 385-1324.

For more information, contact the Dolores Ranger District at 970 882-7296.

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