



## Southwest Area Incident Management Team

TEAM 5 – Dave Gesser– INCIDENT COMMANDER

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### Community meeting tonight; Fire suppression is ongoing, hazards still present Daily Update, Sunday, June 23, 2024

**Public Information Line:** 575-323-8258 or 575-323-8378

**Media Information Line:** 575-323-8053

**Phone Line Hours:** 8 am – 8 pm

**Email:** 2024.southfork@firenet.gov

**Acres:** South Fork – 17,551; Salt – 7,775

**Location:** South Fork – Ruidoso Area  
Salt – 7 mile west of Mescalero, NM

**Fuels:** mixed conifer, grass, pine/juniper

**Start Date:** June 17, 2024

**Personnel:** 1,114

**Containment:** South Fork – 31%; Salt – 7%

**Resources:** 22 Crews, 88 Engines, 13 dozers, and 18 water tenders. Aircraft remain available for bucket and retardant drops if the need arises, and conditions allow.

**Highlights:** Southwest Area Incident Management Team 5 will host a Community Meeting Facebook Live event on Sunday June 23, 2024, at 5pm MDT at <https://www.facebook.com/SWIMT5> with representatives from Lincoln County, Ruidoso Police Department, NM State Police, Red Cross, PNM, Windstream, Mescalero Apache Telephone, Tri-State Electric, Otero Co Electric.

**Unsanctioned drone use puts responders and the public at risk because of the potential for accidents and disruption of suppression operations. A Temporary Flight Restriction (TFR) is still in place over the South Fork and Salt fire area. The TFR prohibits any and all drone use by the public, as they are considered aircraft under federal law.**

As evacuations and closures are lifted, extra precautions should be exercised as emergency and fire vehicles, engines and equipment continue to travel and work along roadways and incident personnel work and travel within neighborhoods.

**Fire Activity:** The South Fork and Salt fires saw additional precipitation on Saturday, making it difficult for crews to access some areas due to unsafe conditions. On Sunday, weather conditions will allow firefighters to continue securing the perimeter and responding to hot spots within the interior of the fire area.

These fires are a long-duration event, and as such, as weather changes occur and temperatures increase, fire activity will increase in unburned pockets of fuel, including stumps and downed trees. As these fuels reignite, smoke may be visible.

Damage and structure assessments are still being conducted. Crews will be available to respond to any new starts and flare ups as needed.

**Weather:** The potential for scattered storms exists today as warmer weather moves into the area. Temperatures will warm to above normal and winds will be mostly light.

**Smoke:** Light smoke was seen on both the South Fork and Salt fires on Saturday. Smoke production will remain light to moderate on Sunday. More variable wind direction, especially during the morning, may lead to light smoke and moderate air quality at times for all locations around the fires. Additional details are available at <https://outlooks.wildlandfiresmoke.net/outlook/430b2c05>.

**Evacuations:** Evacuation and closure status are transitioning. Use [www.lincolncountynm.gov](http://www.lincolncountynm.gov) and [www.ruidoso-nm.gov/south-fork-fire](http://www.ruidoso-nm.gov/south-fork-fire) for the latest information. Contact the Lincoln County Emergency Operations Center at 575-258-6900 if you have questions.

**Closures:** A South Fork Fire Emergency Closure Order was issued on June 20, 2024, for national forest lands within the Smokey Bear Ranger District. The identified areas, and roads and trails therein, are closed to public access to allow firefighting personnel to work and through the fire area safely. More information is available at [www.fs.usda.gov/alerts/lincoln/alerts-notice/?aid=88199](http://www.fs.usda.gov/alerts/lincoln/alerts-notice/?aid=88199).

**A Temporary Flight Restriction (TFR) is also in place over the fire area. Visit <https://www.tfr.faa.gov> for more information. Drone flights are also prohibited within this area. If you fly, we may have to ground our air resources.**

**More information:**

Inciweb: <https://inciweb.wildfire.gov/incident-information/nmmea-south-fork-and-salt>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/SWIMT5>

Smoke Outlook: <https://outlooks.wildlandfiresmoke.net/outlook/430b2c05>

Lincoln County Government: [www.lincolncountynm.gov](http://www.lincolncountynm.gov)


Mescalero Apache Tribe: <https://mescaleroapachetribe.com>

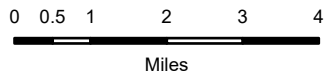
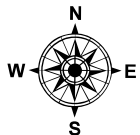
Village of Ruidoso: [www.ruidoso-nm.gov/south-fork-fire](http://www.ruidoso-nm.gov/south-fork-fire)

# Public Information

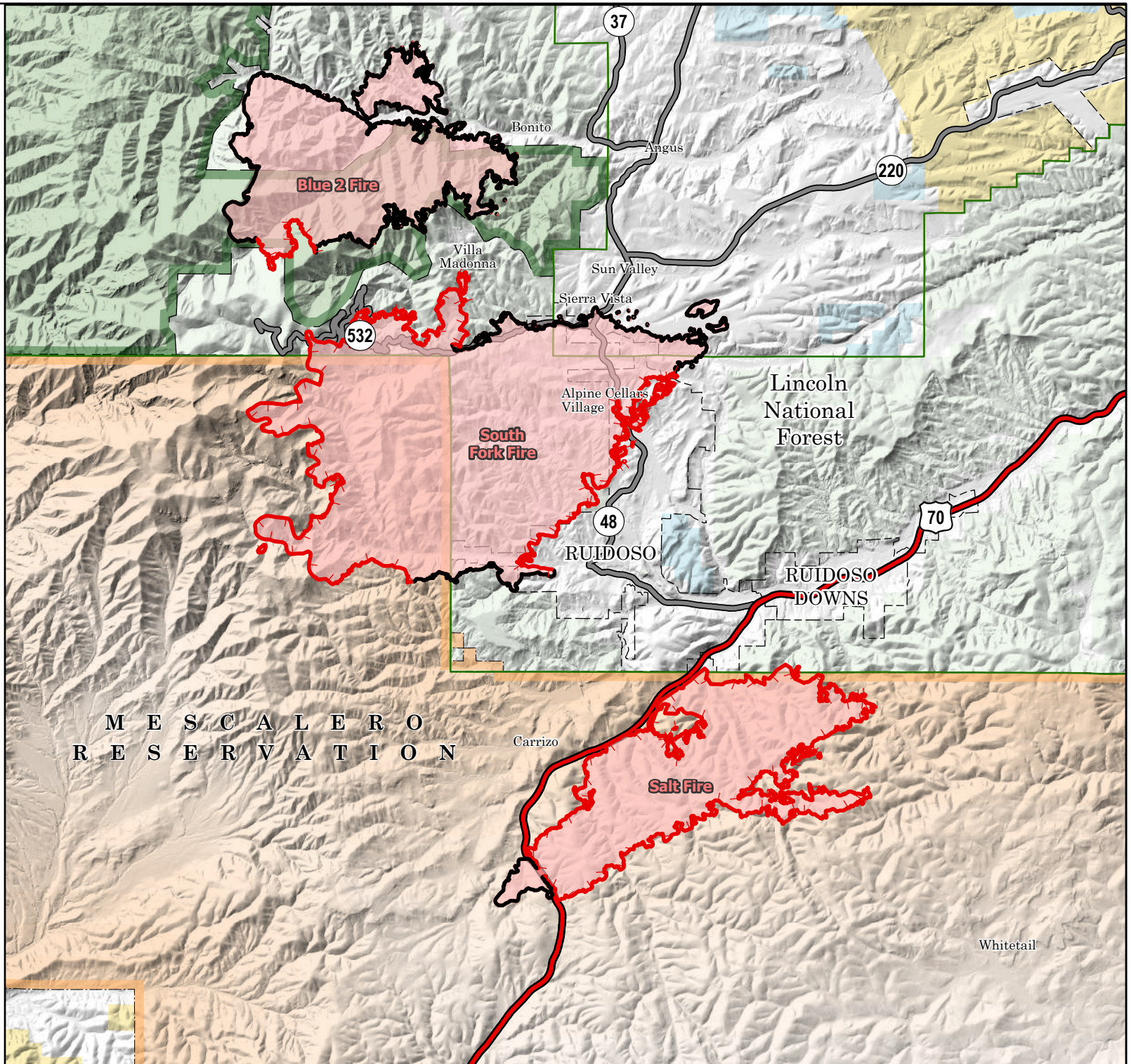
6/23/2024 Day  
 South Fork  
 NM-MEA-000382  
 17,551 acres at 6/22/2024 1315hr

Salt  
 NM-MEA-000385  
 7,775 acres at 6/22/2024 1315hr

-  Contained
-  Uncontained
-  Primary Highway
-  Secondary Highway
-  Tribal Lands
-  USFS Wilderness
-  Forest Service Land
-  Bureau of Land Management Lands
-  State Lands
-  Wildfire Daily Fire Perimeter



1:160,000 | SW IMT 5 | 6/22/2024 2056  
 Acres from Mixed Methods  
 North American 1983 Datum





# Smoke Outlook

## South-Central New Mexico - South Fork and Salt Fires

### 6/23 - 6/24

Issued by Wildland Fire Air Quality Response Program on June 23, 2024 at 06:42 AM MDT

#### Fire

The South Fork Fire is 17,551 acres and 31% contained; The Salt Fire is 7,775 acres and 7% contained. Further information on each fire is available at [inciweb.nwcg.gov](http://inciweb.nwcg.gov).

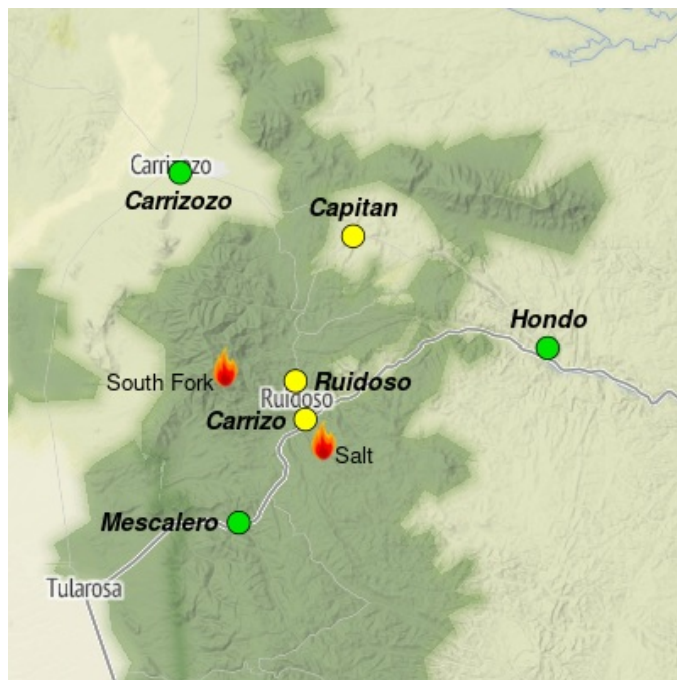
#### Smoke

Despite recent rainfall we continue to see smoldering and smoke production from both fires. Expect this to continue and perhaps increase in some areas that do not receive rain. Locations adjacent to the fires, such as Ruidoso, Ruidoso Downs, and Carrizo (north Mescalero) will see the worst air quality with MODERATE to perhaps brief UNHEALTHY conditions. The highest smoke impacts will typically be during the morning hours.

Carrizozo and Mescalero should continue to see primarily GOOD air quality early this week, but some brief light smoke and MODERATE air quality is possible. As winds become more south and southwesterly look for smoke during the evening and nighttime to be transported towards Capitan. This smoke may drain eastward along Highways 70 and 380 from Ruidoso and Capitan eventually impacting areas out to Hondo with at least MODERATE air quality possible.

#### Showers/Storm Potential

The weather forecast continues to include at least a chance of showers and a storm each day. Any showers or storms could create gusty and erratic winds which could push smoke in any direction. Be alert to any changing weather conditions and remember **if you smell smoke, you are breathing smoke.**



Daily AQI Forecast\* for Sunday

| Station   | Yesterday      | Sat    | Comment for Today -- Sun, Jun 23  | Forecast* |        |
|-----------|----------------|--------|---|-----------|--------|
|           | hourly         | 6/22   |   | Sun       | Mon    |
|           | 6a noon 6p     |        |   | 6/23      | 6/24   |
| Carrizozo | No hourly data |        | GOOD air quality overall but periods of light smoke may continue.               | Green     | Green  |
| Capitan   |                | Yellow | GOOD to MODERATE air quality expected with occasional light smoke.              | Yellow    | Yellow |
| Hondo     | No hourly data |        | GOOD air quality overall but some smoke and MODERATE air quality possible.      | Green     | Green  |
| Ruidoso   |                | Yellow | MODERATE air quality expected to continue with brief GOOD conditions.           | Yellow    | Yellow |
| Carrizo   |                | Orange | Periods of smoke with MODERATE to UNHEALTHY AQI, especially during the morning. | Yellow    | Orange |
| Mescalero | No hourly data |        | GOOD air quality overall but some brief MODERATE conditions possible.           | Green     | Green  |

Issued Jun 23, 2024 by Jayson Prentice, Air Resource Advisor ([Jayson.Prentice@ks.gov](mailto:Jayson.Prentice@ks.gov))

| Air Quality Index (AQI) | Actions to Protect Yourself   |
|-------------------------|---|
| Green Good              | None  |
| Yellow Moderate         | Unusually sensitive individuals should consider limiting prolonged or heavy exertion.     |
| Orange USG              | People within Sensitive Groups* should <b>reduce</b> prolonged or heavy outdoor exertion. |
| Red Unhealthy           | People within Sensitive Groups* should <b>avoid all</b> physical outdoor activity.        |
| Purple Very Unhealthy   | Everyone should avoid prolonged or heavy exertion.  |
| Brown Hazardous         | Everyone should avoid any outdoor activity.   |

\*Disclaimer: This forecast is based on fine particulates only; ozone is not included. Forecasts may be wrong; use at own risk. Use caution as conditions can change quickly. See your health professional as needed. Smoke sensitive groups should take appropriate precautions.

#### Additional Links

[InciWeb South Fork & Salt Fire Information](https://inciweb.wildfire.gov/incident-information/nmmea-south-fork-and-salt) -- <https://inciweb.wildfire.gov/incident-information/nmmea-south-fork-and-salt>

[NM Fire Information](https://nmfireinfo.com/) -- <https://nmfireinfo.com/>

[NM Environmental Public Health Tracking](https://nmtracking.doh.nm.gov/environment/air/FireAndSmoke.html) -- <https://nmtracking.doh.nm.gov/environment/air/FireAndSmoke.html>

[Smoke Ready Information and Resources](https://www.wildlandfiresmoke.net/smoke-ready/smoke-ready-social-media) -- <https://www.wildlandfiresmoke.net/smoke-ready/smoke-ready-social-media>



Issued by Interagency Wildland Fire Air Quality Response Program -- [www.wildlandfiresmoke.net](http://www.wildlandfiresmoke.net)

South-Central New Mexico Updates -- <https://outlooks.wildlandfiresmoke.net/outlook/430b2c05>

\*Smoke and Health Info -- [www.airnow.gov/air-quality-and-health](http://www.airnow.gov/air-quality-and-health)