



Northwest Colorado Fire Management Unit



For Immediate Release
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Lightning The Source Of Recent Fires

Craig, CO – Area vegetation is drying out and many grasses are cured. Sunny days, higher temperatures, lower relative humidities, and dry winds deplete the soil and vegetation of moisture. These conditions contribute to higher fire danger than northwest Colorado has experienced so far this summer. Fire danger is currently moderate at elevations above 6,000 feet and moderate to high across Moffat and Rio Blanco Counties and lower elevations.

The most recent storm front that passed through our region was accompanied by a band of lightning that hit north central Rio Blanco County up through southwest Moffat County. Lightning is the main source of wildfires in northwest Colorado.

“There have been eleven fires since the storm front passed through earlier this week.” said Assistant Fire Management Officer Dave Toelle. “Most of them were less than a tenth acre and are controlled or out. The Crooked Wash Fire, 25 miles northwest of Meeker, is the largest fire so far this summer at 75 acres on Bureau of Land Management public land.”

Fire officials said recent sampling of area vegetation shows a drying trend. Fire season has been delayed due to the spring and early summer rains, but the transition to fire season is underway.

“We want the public to be aware of the changing conditions and rising fire danger,” Toelle said.

The Crooked Wash Fire was reported Wednesday evening. It spread through sagebrush and juniper trees fairly quickly, but has had little growth since the first night. The fire is currently 80% contained with full containment expected by this Saturday, July 18.

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