

Satellite sees smoke from multiple fires in New Mexico

8 July 2019



On July 4, the Visible Infrared Imaging Radiometer Suite (VIIRS) instrument aboard Suomi NPP provided a visible image of the Gila National Forest. The VIIRS image showed three of the fires were generating smoke plumes that could be seen from space as Suomi NPP passed overhead. Two of the plumes were in the Aldo Leopold Wilderness part of the Gila National Forest. The third plume was located west of the Aldo Leopold Wilderness area. The smoke from all fires appeared light brown. VIIRS also detected heat signatures of the fires, and those appear in a red color. Credit: NASA Worldview, Earth Observing System Data and Information System (EOSDIS)/NOAA

The U.S. Forest Service's Gila National Forest reported four naturally caused fires on July 4, 2019, and three of them generated enough smoke to be seen from space by satellite.

On July 4, Inciweb, an interagency all-risk incident information management reported the four fires burning in the Gila National Forest were all sparked by lightning. They include the Black Fire, Little Fire, South Fire and Woodrow Fire.

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part of the Gila National Forest. The third plume was located west of the Aldo Leopold Wilderness area. The smoke from all fires appeared light brown. VIIRS also detected heat signatures of the fires, and those appear in a red color.

Inciweb reported that the Black Fire is approximately 530 acres, burning on National Forest System lands in the Aldo Leopold Wilderness. The lightning-caused South Fire is approximately 780 acres is also in the Aldo Leopold Wilderness, Gila National Forest. Both of these fires generated enough smoke to be seen by NASA-NOAA's Suomi NPP satellite.

The third plume of smoke seen on the Suomi NPP image belongs to the Woodrow Fire.

The lightning-caused Woodrow Fire is approximately 380 acres in the Gila Wilderness, Gila National Forest. This [fire](#) is south of Mogollon Creek and south of Trail Canyon.

The Little Fire was not generating enough smoke to be detected in satellite imagery. The Little Fire is approximately 312 acres, burning on National Forest System lands in the Gila Wilderness, Gila National Forest. Inciweb reported that the fire is approximately 4.5 miles west of the Gila Cliff Dwellings National Monument. This fire has black-lined itself and crossed the area of Little Creek and there is no visible smoke in the area.

Gila National Forest is located in southwestern New Mexico. The Gila National Forest website noted that the [forest](#) "boasts a rich history of the Mogollon and Apache Indians, Spaniards, Mexicans, ranchers, prospectors and miners. Apache Chiefs Mangas Coloradas, Geronimo, and Victorio, Aldo Leopold: conservationist, ecologist and author of the Sand County Almanac, and renowned lion hunter Ben Lilly are but a few of the personalities who left their mark in the Gila."

Provided by NASA's Goddard Space Flight Center

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