

# N E W S

## HIGH FIRE DANGER!



Fire danger is high to extreme right now across the West Slope of Colorado. Dry, hot weather and dry vegetation exists in most areas. Future weather conditions will remain dry, hot and windy. Most of the west slope is in fire restrictions including National Forest, BLM and counties. Please be aware of current restrictions in your area. Stay informed about what is allowed and not allowed by visiting [westslopefireinfo.com](http://westslopefireinfo.com). This site offers information about fireworks, campfires and other questions you might have.

Be fire safe! and in the words of Smokey Bear, "Do your part. Don't let a wildfire start."

## GMUG EMPLOYEE EARNS VOLUNTEERS & SERVICE LEADERSHIP AWARD

Paul Kimpling, of the Grand Mesa, Uncompahgre and Gunnison (GMUG) National Forests' Paonia Ranger District has been awarded a 2017 Forest Service Volunteers & Service Leadership Award. The agency-wide award program recognizes partners, volunteers and staff for their work in the areas of Citizen Stewardship & Partnerships, Cultural Diversity, Enduring Service, Leadership and Restoration.

Through Kimpling's leadership the GMUG has been able to engage with key partners and secure funding for programs that involve youth, such as Every Kid in a Park (EKIP) and the 21st Century Conservation Corps (21CSC). As the crew leader of the Paonia Ranger District's Youth Conservation Corps (YCC), Paul collaborated with 21CSC member organizations, Western Colorado Conservation Corps and Student Conservation Corps, on joint projects showing the collective power of youth leading youth. He also coordinated with Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management Resource Specialists to share their natural resource expertise with the YCC in a variety of disciplines as well as organizing a rafting trip to a unique archeological site.

Paul's drive and natural leadership has led to implementation of new partnerships and programs aimed at educating our local youth" Said Scott Armentrout, GMUG Forest Supervisor "We are extremely pleased to have him on our team"

## TABEGUACHE FIRE UPDATE

- Location: 7 miles northeast of Nucla
- Start Date: July 6, 2018
- Size: Approximately 500 acres
- Percent Contained: 65 percent
- Jurisdiction: USFS

- Cause: Lightning
- Vegetation: Pinyon-juniper, brush

Summary: At 10:00 p.m. on Friday, July 6, 2018, the lightning-caused Tabeguache Fire was reported seven miles northeast of Nucla, CO, on the Grand Mesa, Uncompahgre and Gunnison National Forests (GMUG).

The fire is approximately 500 acres and is 65 percent contained. There are currently 134 firefighters working in steep terrain comprised of pinyon-juniper and brush. Firefighters have taken advantage of reduced fire activity and made good progress on the east, south, and west sides of the fire. No structures have been damaged, and none are threatened at this time.

- Fire Behavior: Fire behavior today has been minimal with creeping and smoldering activity.

- Resources Assigned and Ordered:

Crews: 4

Engines: 4

Helicopters: 2

Water Tenders: 2

Miscellaneous Overhead

- Structures Threatened: None

- Road Closures: Road closure for National Forest Service Road 660 has been lifted.

Temporary Flight Restriction (TFR): A TFR is in effect over the fire area until further notice. This restriction includes “drones” or unmanned aerial vehicles. Remember, “If you fly, we can’t!” Aerial fire suppression resources will be grounded if drones enter restricted airspace, which could result in serious consequences.

Fire Restrictions: Stage 2 fire restrictions are in effect on the Uncompahgre and Gunnison National Forests. Stage 1 fire restrictions are in effect on the Grand Mesa National Forest. Please visit [www.WestSlopeFireInfo.com](http://www.WestSlopeFireInfo.com) for additional information.

- Incident Commander: Joe Sampson

- Fire Information Links:

Grand Mesa, Uncompahgre and Gunnison National Forests Fire Information: 970-874-6602

Grand Mesa, Uncompahgre and Gunnison National Forests website: [www.fs.usda.gov/gmug](http://www.fs.usda.gov/gmug)

West Slope Fire Information: [www.WestSlopeFireInfo.com](http://www.WestSlopeFireInfo.com)

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/GMUG.NF/>

Twitter: [https://twitter.com/GMUG\\_NF](https://twitter.com/GMUG_NF)

## YARD OF THE WEEK!



The yard chosen this week by the Top O’ The World garden club is owned by Ellen and Derek Davis. Their home is at 714 Denver Avenue and they have owned it for two years. The changes are amazing. There are several new flower beds planted with a mixture of annuals and perennials. The addition of red bark mulch really makes the beds stand out. The southwest corner of the lot has been nicely redone with stone, large rocks and trees. The trees in the yard add interest and balance the changes the couple have made. There is a new greenhouse on the side of the home and the paths in the yard are very attractive. There are wildflowers planted along the ditch on the west side. We have watched this yard become transformed in just two years, and are anxious to see what the future brings.

# TABEGUACHE FIRE

At 10:34 p.m. on Friday, July 6, 2018, the lightning-caused Tabeguache fire was reported seven miles northeast of Nucla, CO on the Grand Mesa, Uncompahgre and Gunnison National Forests (GMUG).

The fire is approximately 155 acres and zero percent contained as of 8:00 p.m. Approximately 80 firefighters are working in steep terrain comprised of pinyon-juniper and brush with moderate to high fire behavior with some isolated torching. Firefighters are being assisted by both helicopters dropping water directly on the fire and air tankers dropping retardant to slow the spread of fire. Additional resources have been ordered. Currently, there are no structures threatened. The fire is currently receiving a fair amount of precipitation.

## **ROAD CLOSURES DUE TO FIRE ACTIVITY:**

- Pinto Mesa Road (National Forest Service Road (NFSR) 660
  - 25 Mesa Road (Delta-Nucla Road) is closed between the Forest boundary outside of Nucla, Colorado and NFSR 640
- Firefighter and public safety will remain the priorities on this incident.

## **FIRE STATISTICS:**

Name: Tabeguache

Location: 7 miles northeast of Nucla, CO

Size: Approximately 155 acres

Cause: Lightning

Jurisdiction: USFS

Containment: 0%

Threatened Structures: 0

Incident Commander: Mike Schultz

## **FIRE INFORMATION LINKS:**

Grand Mesa, Uncompahgre and Gunnison National Forests Fire Information: 970-874-6602

Grand Mesa, Uncompahgre and Gunnison National Forests website: [www.fs.usda.gov/gmug](http://www.fs.usda.gov/gmug)

West Slope Fire Information: [www.WestSlopeFireInfo.com](http://www.WestSlopeFireInfo.com)

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/GMUG.NF/>

Twitter: [https://twitter.com/GMUG\\_NF](https://twitter.com/GMUG_NF)

# TWO DEAD MOUNTAIN GOATS FOUND SHOT ON QUANDARY PEAK TRAIL

Colorado Parks and Wildlife (CPW) is asking for the public's help in collecting information related to two mountain goats that were shot and found dead on July 4, approximately 2.8 miles up the Quandary Peak Trail. The mountain goats were young males, between 1 and 2 years old, and found approximately 40 yards away from each other. CPW officers are looking for information from anyone hiking Quandary Peak on July 2 or 3 who might have seen something.

Members of the public who may have information should contact the Operation Game Thief (OGT) hotline at 877-265-6648. The reporting party (RP) can receive a \$1,000 reward if the information leads to a citation being issued or an arrest made. The request for the reward should be made when the RP calls the OGT hotline. The RP may remain anonymous if they so choose.

## **PENALTIES FOR THIS CRIME ARE COVERED UNDER C.R.S. 33-6-10, WILDLIFE--ILLEGAL POSSESSION.**

For each rocky mountain goat a fine of not less than one thousand dollars and not more than one hundred thousand dollars, or by imprisonment for not more than one year in the county jail, or both such fine and such imprisonment, and an assessment of twenty points. Upon conviction, the commission may suspend any or all license privileges of the person for a period of one year to life.

In addition to the criminal penalties listed above there shall be assessed a further penalty in the amount of ten thousand dollars for each mountain goat illegally taken.

## **CONSUMER ADVISORY: WILDFIRES CREATE LANDSCAPES PRONE TO FLOODS**

### **NOW IS THE TIME TO CONSIDER BUYING FLOOD INSURANCE**

Wildfires continue to devastate many areas around the state. Yet when the fires subside, a new danger becomes much more prevalent: FLOODING.

Most homeowners do not realize that their basic homeowners insurance does not include protection from flood damage, and that flood insurance must be purchased as a separate policy. Because of this, the Colorado Division of Insurance (DOI), part of the Department of Regulatory Agencies, cautions anyone living in or around areas that have been hit by wildfires to consider buying flood insurance sooner rather than later.

“I know this is a tough message to hear right now. But, unfortunately, it’s imperative for people to seriously think about buying flood insurance,” said Interim Insurance Commissioner Michael Conway. “In Colorado we know that today’s 95 degrees can quickly turn into a severe thunderstorm. Heavy rains will come to these areas, and because flood insurance requires a 30-day waiting period before it provides coverage, I encourage people not to wait.”

Why is there an increased risk of flooding? Take a look at this information from the Federal Emergency Management (FEMA) website “Wildfires: You Need Flood Insurance.”

“Large-scale wildfires dramatically alter the terrain and ground conditions. Normally, vegetation absorbs rainfall, reducing runoff. However, wildfires leave the ground charred, barren, and unable to absorb water, creating conditions ripe for flash flooding and mudflow. Flood risk remains significantly higher until vegetation is restored—up to 5 years after a wildfire. Flooding after a fire is often more severe, as debris and ash left from the fire can form mudflows. As rainwater moves across charred and denuded ground, it can also pick up soil and sediment and carry it in a stream of floodwaters. This can cause more significant damage.”

### **BUYING FLOOD INSURANCE**

If a flood occurs within the first 30 days of purchasing and paying the first premium of a flood policy, there will be NO coverage, so it is important to start considering flood insurance now. There are exceptions to the 30-day waiting period, but these are specific, limited situations. Get the details by asking your agent and visiting the FEMA website “Wildfires: You Need Flood Insurance” (click on the question, “Will it take 30 days for my policy to become effective?”)

FEMA administers the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP), a federally subsidized program available to any property owner —homeowners, renters, condominium owners and associations — whether or not the property is in floodplain. National Flood Insurance premiums vary depending on location and the type of coverage chosen. Coverage choices include insuring only the structure of a home or also including its contents.

Contact your insurance agent about buying flood insurance. If you do not have an agent or your agent does not sell flood insurance, contact the NFIP at 800-427-4661 or go to [www.floodsmart.gov](http://www.floodsmart.gov) to get the name of an agent in your area. National Flood Insurance is sold through a private insurance agent selling it to a community that has joined NFIP. Through the NFIP, the federal government makes flood insurance available in communities that have reduced future flood risks. Over 19,000 communities in the U.S. and its territories participate in the NFIP.

For more information, visit the DOI flood insurance webpage or the FEMA / NFIP website [www.floodsmart.gov](http://www.floodsmart.gov). At [floodsmart.gov](http://floodsmart.gov) you can also enter your address to get an estimated flood risk profile

# GREAT RESERVOIR FISHING ABOUNDS IN SOUTHWEST COLORADO

Durango resident Samantha Brow is an avid high-country creek angler, but she tried her skills at Groundhog Reservoir in western Colorado on July 1 and was happy that she did.

“We paddled onto the lake and got into some really big fish, it was a blast,” Brow said.

But you don’t need a boat to fish any of the dozens of reservoirs in southwest Colorado which are stocked throughout the summer. Most reservoirs receive a good supply of rainbow trout and several lakes also offer a menu of warm-water fish.

“We have a big variety of fishing opportunities in this area of Colorado that anglers should check out,” said John Alves, senior aquatic biologist for CPW’s Southwest Region.

CPW wildlife managers are encouraging more anglers to try their luck at reservoirs this year because many of Southwest Colorado’s rivers are flowing low and water temperatures are much higher than normal. Those conditions can be stressful for wild trout. When the water in rivers and streams nudges up above 70 degrees, anglers are asked to stop fishing for the day.

But in reservoirs there is little concern about water temperature, Alves explained. If the water is too warm for fish, they can just go deeper. Also, anglers who catch fish in reservoirs can keep them and enjoy them in a good meal, Alves said.

“A lot of stream anglers practice catch-and-release, but that’s not necessary in many of Colorado’s reservoirs. Often, trout stocked in reservoirs are raised in a hatchery to a ‘catchable’ size. We want people to catch them and eat them.”

While rainbow trout are stocked in most reservoirs in Southwest Colorado there are also unique fishing opportunities. At Blue Mesa Reservoir near Gunnison anglers can pursue kokanee salmon and lake trout. At Crawford State Park you’ll find trout, largemouth bass, perch and the occasional northern pike.

At Nighthorse Reservoir near Durango anglers are making nice catches of brown trout, rainbow trout and kokanee salmon. Vallecito Reservoir is a great place to escape the heat and provides anglers a smorgasbord of choices. Fish species include: smallmouth bass, walleye, Northern pike, kokanee, brook, brown and rainbow trout.

On the west side of the San Luis Valley, Beaver Creek Reservoir was recently expanded and provides lots of elbow room for anglers. Big Meadows Reservoir is scenic, stocked with rainbow trout and has naturally reproducing brook trout.

West of Montrose, Miramonte Reservoir offers 400-acres of great trout fishing in a beautiful setting below the peaks of the San Juan Mountains. Southeast of Montrose an easy half-mile hike into Clear Lake provides opportunities for brook, cutthroat and tiger trout. Tiger trout are a brook-brown trout cross and these fish have beautiful vermiculated bodies. Also north of Montrose, the Grand Mesa is the place to go for a variety of fishing opportunities. For example, Island Lake is a great place for families while the Granby Reservoirs – popular for off-road adventurers – are teeming with brook, cutthroat, brown and tiger trout.

Anglers who still crave river fishing should plan to fish early in the day when water is cool. Anglers can also hike to streams in the high country where water temperature probably won’t be an issue.

And for those who need a bit more incentive to go fishing, the 4th Annual Ridgway Smallmouth Bass Tournament runs from July 7-28 at Ridgway State Park. A total of \$5,000 in prizes is being offered and every participant who turns in smallmouth bass has a chance to win \$1,500. Another \$1,500 prize will go to the angler who catches the most smallmouth bass. There is no entry fee to enter the tournament; all you need is a Colorado fishing license. Park entry fee is \$7 per day.

Anglers wanting to explore what Southwest Colorado offers can find more information using CPW’s fishing atlas. Anglers can find the atlas and much more online at CPW’s fishing page. <http://cpw.state.co.us/placestogo/Pages/Fishing.aspx>

“This will be a good year for anglers to try some new waters throughout the state,” Alves said.

And what did Samantha Brow use to catch 14-inch rainbows at Groundhog Reservoir? Following some good advice from some local Durango fly shops, she used a midge and sinking line.



# **CONSUMER ALERT: INSURANCE COMPANIES SHOULD WORK WITH WILDFIRE EVACUEES**

## **CONTACT THE COMPANY TO FIND OUT ABOUT YOUR COVERAGE**

With many Coloradans around the state evacuated from their homes due to wildfires, the Division of Insurance, part of the Department of Regulatory Agencies, is reminding people that their insurance companies should work with them on the various problems the wildfires and the evacuations will cause.

Because each company will approach this differently, contact your company directly to discuss the evacuation, get information about your policy and how it can work with you so that nothing gets missed.

If you've been evacuated, contact your insurance company to let them know where you are and start discussing the situation. Ask questions about your coverage, including coverage for additional living expenses, and the claims process. You want to be prepared should your home be damaged by the fire.

If it is time for you to make a premium payment or renew your coverage, ask about grace periods to handle these things. Each company will be different, so find out if your company will offer a 30-day or 60-day grace period, or some other time frame, such as a specific date. Some companies may simply extend due dates or waive late fees.

Companies should be flexible with their policyholders regarding premium payments, but you need to be proactive in letting your company know you have been evacuated. This can protect you should the company cancel you for non-payment of your premium.

Interim Insurance Commissioner Michael Conway stressed the availability of the Division of Insurance as a resource for policyholders. "If your insurance company isn't working with you - is not granting a grace period, has improperly cancelled your coverage, or is just generally unresponsive - please contact the Division of Insurance and our dedicated Consumer Services team so they can look into what's happening. In these crises, it's important that everyone work together, and we need to know when that isn't happening."

Contact the Division's Consumer Services team - 800-930-3745 / 303-894-7490 / [DORA\\_Insurance@state.co.us](mailto:DORA_Insurance@state.co.us).

## **'SIMPSONS' WRITER-PRODUCER GIVES READING AT VALLEY BOOKSTORES**

"The Simpsons" is coming to the Gunnison Valley – or at least the show's 28-year writing veteran Mike Reiss is. And he'll offer a talk and signing at two Valley locations: Townie Books in Crested Butte on Friday, July 20 at 2:00 p.m.; and at The Bookworm on Saturday, July 21, at 2:00 p.m. – both for his new book "Springfield Confidential: Jokes, Secrets, and Outright Lies From a Lifetime Writing for The Simpsons."

Reiss, a four-time Emmy award-winning producer, has also written seventeen children's books, including the best-seller How Murray Saved Christmas and the award-winning Late for School. He has also contributed to more than two dozen animated films, including Ice Age movies, two Despicable Me movies, The Lorax, Rio, Kung Fu Panda 3 and The Simpsons Movie.

According to a recent interview with Reiss on "salonTV," his latest book "is a behind-the-scenes look at the beloved characters and how the writers' room has evolved over 29 seasons. Reiss, a 'Simpsons' lifer, has been with the show since its first episode in 1989 and says he could keep writing the show 'forever.'"

Reiss is in town as a presenter for the Writing the Rockies creative writing conference at Western, but he's also given the Gunnison Arts Center permission to produce his Off-Broadway play, "Comedy Is Hard," where he'll give audience talk-backs after the performances on Friday (7/20) and Saturday (7/21) nights.

Both readings and signings are free and open to the public. For the GAC performances and audience talk-backs, see the GAC website at [www.gunnisonartscenter.org/comedy-is-hard](http://www.gunnisonartscenter.org/comedy-is-hard). Contact Mark Todd at 943-2016 for more information.

## **UPDATE: SOUTH ENTRANCE OPEN AT LAKE PUEBLO STATE PARK, SWIM BEACH REMAINS CLOSED**

Colorado Parks and Wildlife is removing barricades on some roads at Lake Pueblo State Park that were installed due to the Stonemoor Fire. Roads accessing Rock Canyon, Cottonwood, and Valco Ponds parking lot remain closed.

Highway 96 is open south of the park and entry is now available via both the north and south entrances.

Areas in the Rock Canyon area that still remain closed include:

- Swim beach
- Anticline pond
- Osprey picnic area

All trail and river access from the bridge at Juniper Road to the nature center is closed.

These areas remain closed because firefighters continue to work on hot spots and large Cottonwood trees that are burning from the inside in areas along the river, trails and in Osprey Picnic area. This work could continue for several days and access will be closed until all impacted areas are deemed safe for the public. The Swim Beach area and Anticline Pond were not in the burn area. They are fine, but remain closed while crews are active in that area.

For current fire status and evacuation notices, visit the Pueblo County Sheriff's Office online at the following locations:

- Website: [puebloemergency.info](http://puebloemergency.info)
- Facebook: PuebloSheriff
- Twitter: PuebloCountySO
- Hashtag: #StonemoorFire

