



United States Department of the Interior

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY
UNITED STATES WILDLAND FIRE SERVICE

In Reply Refer to:

Date: June 28, 2026

To: Brian Fennessy, Fire Chief, US Wildland Fire Service
Sarah Fisher, Deputy Chief for Fire and Aviation Management, US Forest Service

From: Paul Hohn, Rocky Mountain Geographic Area Fire Chief, US Wildland Fire Service

Subject: 24-Hour Preliminary Report: Gore and Knowles Fires

THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION IS PREMILINARY AND SUBJECT TO CHANGE

Location: SW of Loma, Colorado, Knowles Fires

Date of Occurrence: June 27, 2026

Time of Occurrence: Approximately 1600

Activity: Wildland Fire Suppression

Number of Injuries: 5 total Firefighters Involved

Number of Fatalities: 3

Narrative: Firefighters from an interagency helitack crew staffed by both USWFS and USFS employees were involved in a burnover event while providing an initial attack response to the Gore and Knowles fires. Five firefighters from the crew deployed fire shelters. Two firefighters were transported to hospital with burn injuries and three were fatally injured.

A Wildland Fire Serious Accident Investigation Team (SAIT) will be mobilized to conduct a comprehensive investigation. The purpose of the investigation is to identify the factors and circumstances surrounding the incident, develop lessons learned, and provide recommendations to help prevent similar tragedies in the future.

cc:

Thomas Heinlein, Bureau of Land Management - Colorado
Christopher Wilcox, United States Wildland Fire Service
Erin Phelps, United States Forest Service
Allison Richards, United States Forest Service
Jake Nuttal, United States Forest Service