



Forest Service

Rocky Mountain Geographic Area,
Grand Mesa, Uncompahgre, and
Gunnison National Forest

2250 South Main Street,
Delta, Colorado 81416
970-874-6600

File Code: 5100; 5700

Date: July 13, 2026

Subject: 24 Hour Preliminary Report

To: Troy Heithecker, Rocky Mountain Area Regional Forester

THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION IS PRELIMINARY AND SUBJECT TO CHANGE

Location: Ouray, Colorado

Date of occurrence: July 12, 2026, approximately 1700 MT

Activity: Aviation Operations

Number of fatalities: One

During aviation operations on the Gold Mountain Fire there was an aviation mishap resulting in a fatality. The NTSB is responding with the Forest Service as a party to the investigation.

The United States Forest Service (USFS) has coordinated with state and local law enforcement to ensure the respectful and safe transportation of the deceased. The USFS is coordinating with impacted resources to provide Critical Incident Stress Management (CISM) to any resources that have been impacted by this incident.

More information will be provided in the 72 hour report.

Dana Gardunio, Gold Mountain Fire, Agency Administrator

CC: Bunni Maceo, Rocky Mountain Area Deputy Regional Forester

Chad Stewart, San Juan Forest Supervisor

Allison Richards, Rocky Mountain Area Fire Director

Clark Hammond, Rocky Mountain Regional Aviation Officer

Scott Bovey, Rocky Mountain Area Fire Risk Management Officer

Scott Headrick, Rocky Mountain Regional Aviation Safety Officer

Monte Ulmer, National Director of Occupational Safety and Occupational Health

Erin Phelps, Acting Deputy Director of Fire and Aviation

Anthony Madrid, Acting National Director for Aviation

