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## Unified Fire in Valencia County at 500 acres, evacuation order lifted

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A Mimbres firefighter at the Unified Fire on Wednesday in Valencia County.

Courtesy Albuquerque Fire Rescue

Crews are still battling a 500-acre wildfire near the small Valencia County community of Madrone that was not contained Wednesday but has so far not damaged any structures or led to any injuries.

Evacuations and road closures were lifted across the area late Tuesday, and power was turned back on. The Unified Fire held within its control lines overnight, according to the state Forestry Division.

This comes as the National Weather Service sounds the alarm about a significant fire weather pattern developing. The dry fuel brought by worsening drought conditions and historically low snowpack levels means lightning strikes from storms could ignite new fires

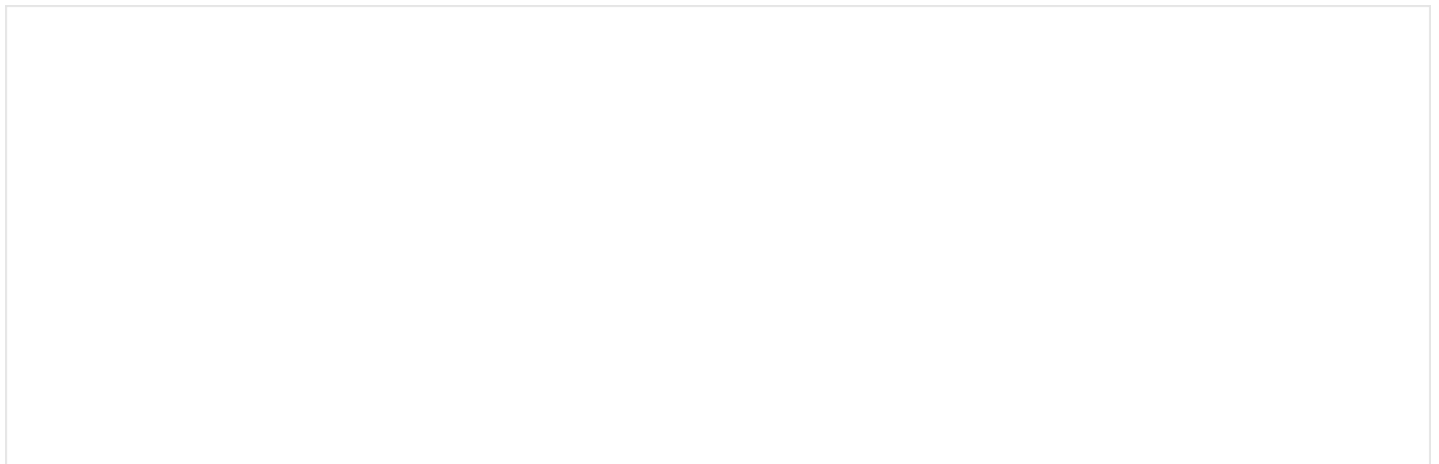


The Unified Fire on Tuesday. The blaze has grown to 500 acres but an evacuation order has been lifted.  
Courtesy Valencia County Fire Department

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Lily Alexander is a Santa Fe New Mexican reporter through a fellowship with the New Mexico Local News Fund.

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