

## **Rodeo- Chediski is 100% contained**

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The largest wildfire in Arizona's recorded history was 100 percent contained Sunday evening, fire officials said.

Full containment of the Rodeo-Chediski Fire was announced at 6 p.m., and it came 19 days after the start of one of the two fires that merged to become the massive blaze.

The fire has burned 468,638 acres on the Mogollon Rim and has caused more than \$28 million in damage.

Firefighting costs stood at more than \$43 million, said Rick Hartigan, fire information officer with the Central West Zone Incident Management Team.

More than 30,000 people were evacuated from several communities, and 426 structures were destroyed by the fire. All evacuees have been allowed to return to their homes.

While the fire is contained - meaning the fire's perimeter is no longer in danger of spreading - it isn't controlled, with several "islands" of unburned vegetation still within the fire lines.

"'Contained' is when you have a wild horse inside a fence," Hartigan said. "'Controlled' is when you've got it trained. We've got this fire inside the fence."

Because of the size of the area burned by the fire, and also the number of areas that could still flare up, firefighters are depending on the weather to help set a control date.

The National Weather Service in Flagstaff said the monsoon appears to be heading to the area, with a chance of afternoon or evening showers forecast for the entire week.

There were 938 fire personnel still working the blaze Sunday, down from a high of more than 4,000 when the fire raged out of control. Crews already have begun rehabilitation of land scarred by the fire.

During the week, crop-dusters will fly over some burned areas, dropping seeds of ground cover aimed at preventing soil from eroding when it rains.

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