

Grand Canyon National Park Updates



Ed Keable, Superintendent
August 2025

Dragon Bravo Fire 2025





Dragon Bravo Fire – Timeline of Events

- Lightning strike July 4, 2025
- July 4-11 the fire was managed using a confine and contain suppression strategy.





Dragon Bravo Fire Facts: July 10

- NPS, Aramark, and partners evacuated approximately 500 visitors from the North Rim due to the threat of losing access to Highway 67 by the **White Sage Fire** which was burning to the north on BLM lands and the Kaibab National Forest.
- North Rim residents were encouraged to **shelter in place** allowing them to remain safely on site while evacuation logistics were coordinated.



Air tanker on White Sage Fire on July 10 (BLM Photo)



Dragon Bravo Fire Facts: July 11

- 3:30 p.m. - unpredictable shifting winds caused a breach of the eastern containment line, resulting in rapid fire growth toward the NPS administrative area.
- Forecast winds of 8 mph shifted to 20 mph, changing direction and driving the fire toward key infrastructure, causing **rapid expansion**.
- At 4:20 p.m. NPS issued a “GO” evacuation order for 335 residents and staff. Shelter for evacuated employees established at the Albright Training Center.



Dragon Bravo Fire approaching NPS administrative area on July 11
(Photo L. Cisneros)



Dragon Bravo Fire Facts: July 12

- Chlorine gas leak reported at water treatment facility following fire damage;
- Inner-Canyon closure issued and visitors evacuated as a precaution.
- Aerial assessment revealed extensive damage:
 - 11 NPS staff residences lost
 - Water treatment plant damaged
 - Office buildings, vehicles, and equipment damaged



An NPS firefighter, North Rim administrative area July 11- 12 (NPS Photo/N. Mann)



What Was Lost... The Grand Canyon Lodge





What Was Lost - ~ 106 buildings/structures



NPS Administration Building



NPS Management House ca 1932





What Was Not



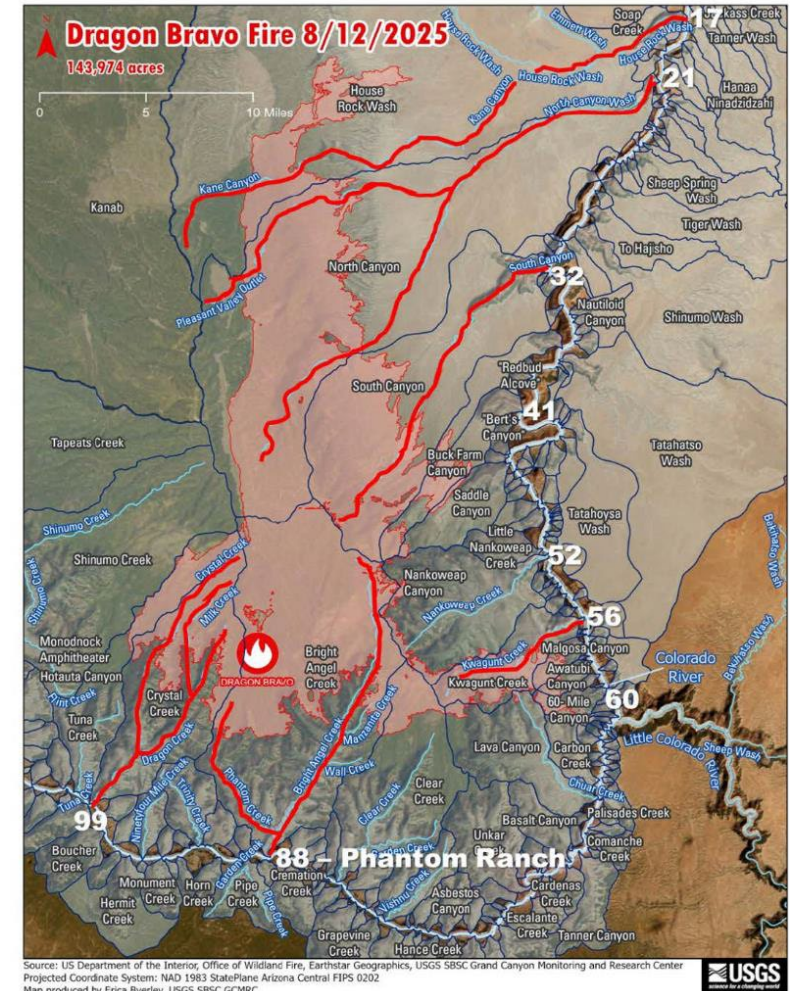
Iconic Patio Remains





Flash Flood Risk

- Loss of vegetation and hardened, water repelling soils increase rapid runoff after rainfall.
- Affected watersheds: Bright Angel Creek (Phantom Ranch), House Rock, North & South Canyons, Buck Farm Canyon, Clear Creek, Malgosa, Awatubi, 60-Mile, Tuna Creek, Crystal Creek and Kwagunt Creek.
- Duration of elevated risk at least 2 years; even historically low-risk areas may now experience flash flooding.
- Park is working with NWS Flagstaff, Coconino County Emergency Management, and USGS for monitoring and alerts.



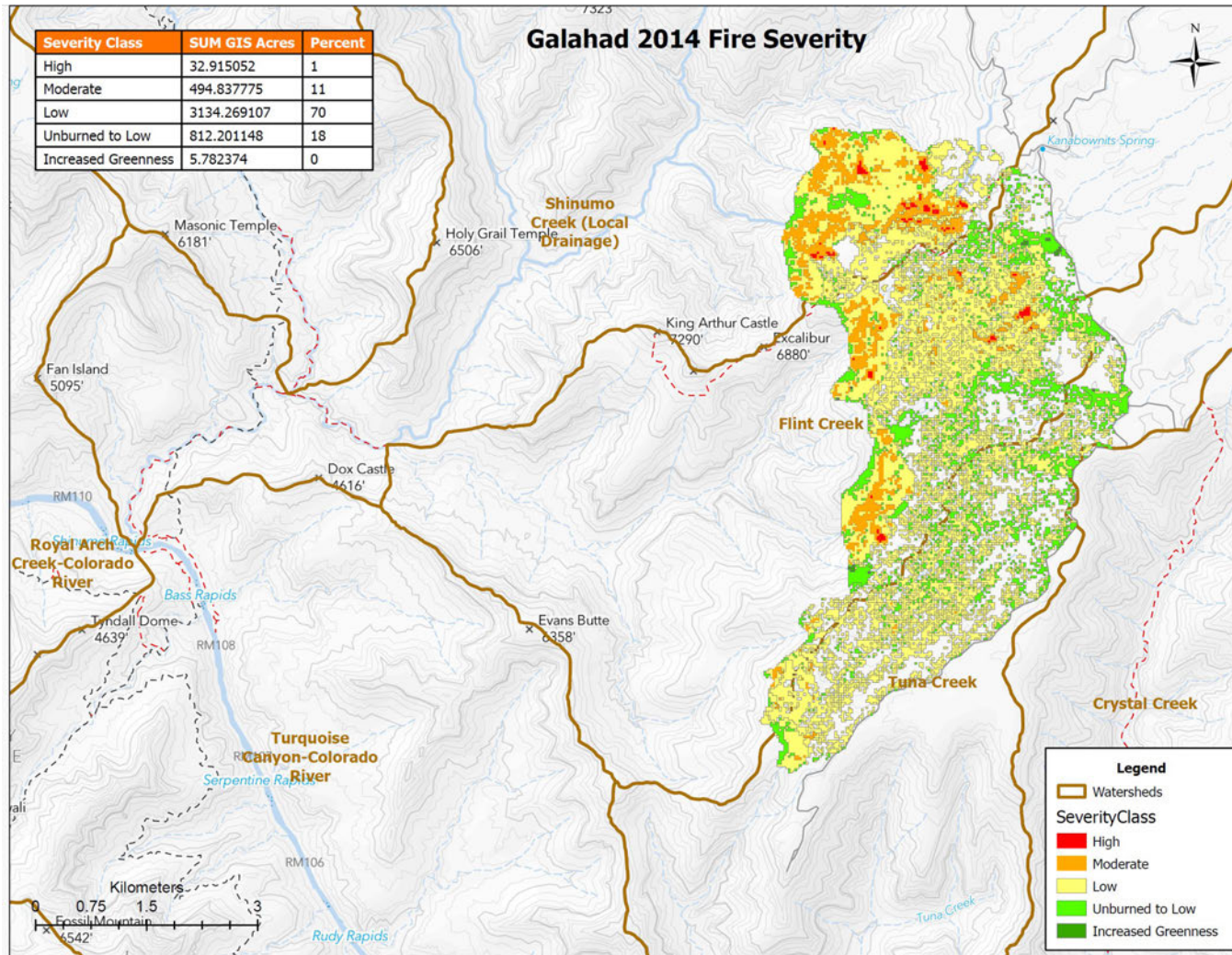
Impacted watersheds (USGS/E. Byerley)

High Risk Drainages with Native Fish Concern

- Bright Angel Creek actions
 - Intensive telemetered water quality monitoring and rain gages
 - Potential fish salvage and translocation- humpback chub if encountered & bluehead sucker- before flooding/ debris flows occur
 - Protect against invasion or re-colonization of nonnative fish species, evaluating the potential for barriers, mechanical removal, and/or chemical removal
- Several other watersheds are also heavily impacted, meaning that water quality and habitat alterations could negatively affect fish populations not only in tributaries but also in the mainstem Colorado River.
- Humpback Chub Species Status Assessment- the potential negative impacts of post-fire occurrences on humpback chub should be a focal point during the upcoming Species Status Assessment preparation given that GRCA has the largest remaining subpopulation.



2014 Galahad Fire- A Cautionary Tale



- Galahad Fire burned over 6,000 acres in the Shinumo Creek watershed (~10%)
- Relatively low severity burn
- Much smaller footprint than the Dragon Bravo Fire (currently 144,000+ acres)
- Fire was followed by heavy localized rainfall on top of the burned area- caused severe flood disturbance & the widespread deposition of charred wood & ash
- Resulted in the extirpation of all translocated humpback chub and bluehead sucker in the drainage



2014 Galahad Fire & Flooding, before & after



2014 Galahad Fire & Flooding, before & after





2014 Galahad Fire & Flooding, before & after





Recovery Planning

The Burned Area Emergency Response (BAER) team

- Interdisciplinary team called upon for large and complex fires
- In-Brief with the team this week
- Provides “first-aid” care
- Writes a plan to provide emergency stabilization to protect life and property & to prevent further degradation of natural and cultural resources.
- Park teams will work on implementation plans over the coming months and years

