



CONTRERAS FIRE

June 19, 2022

9:00 a.m.

SUMMARY: The Contreras Fire started June 11 on a remote ridge of the Baboquivari Mountain range, north of the Baboquivari Peak, 20 miles east of Sells, Arizona, on the Tohono O'odham Indian Reservation.

TODAY: The Operations Section for the Eastern Area Team has determined that the Contreras Fire is now 40% contained. This reflects the hard work of crews in the southern and eastern areas of the fire. A contingent of engines and a hand crew will remain in these areas to continue to monitor and secure fire lines. Resources will be shifted to the Kitt Peak area to assist with on-going fire suppression to the northeast of the site. Aerial resources are expected to remain over the fire today in the absence of lightning. Fire behavior will remain typical of the Contreras Fire, with extremely dry fuels, and movement upslope pushed by winds. Along Highway 86, toward the Pan Tak and Cowtown communities, fire behavior will be monitored with crews and engines. Operations staff will continue the development of a structure protection plan for these two communities. Four structures, consisting of two out-buildings, a dormitory and a residence, were lost at the Kitt Peak Observatory during the run of the fire on the morning of the 17th. Scientific facilities and instrumentation appear intact, assessments of damage to instrumentation will begin once conditions allow for safe entry into the area. To the west, the fire will be allowed to burn down the slope into more advantageous terrain that will allow crews to safely engage the fire. Engines and crews will continue to patrol both the east and west flanks of the fire.

YESTERDAY: Northern firefighting operations focused heavily on fire suppression and structure protection at the Kitt Peak Observatory and the Pan Tak Community in the Schuk Toak District of the Tohono O'odham Nation. The status for the Pan Tak community was revised to SET status. Six helicopters provided support for hand crews on the ground. Vegetation remained exceptionally dry, with rain impacting only the southeast area of the fire. Defensible firing actions were conducted to moderate the intensity of approaching fire in the area of Kitt Peak. On the east side of the fire, fire crews scouted for access points for crews and equipment. Near Elkhorn Ranch, structure protection crews worked to establish stronger control lines, patrolling through burned areas to detect and extinguish any remaining sources of heat. Some resources were moved to the northeast area of the fire where more fire activity was prevalent. The western perimeter of the fire was allowed to move slowly and southwesterly downslope toward more favorable terrain where crews could engage the fire.

INCIDENT STATISTICS

- Fire start date: June 11, 2022
- Cause: Lightning
- Acres: 18,843, an increase of 1,197 acres from yesterday
- Containment: 40%
- Total Personnel: 350+
- Jurisdiction: BIA, Papago Agency

RESOURCES

Crews: 8
Engines: 10
Water Tenders: 5
Helicopters: 7

Evacuations: Elkhorn Ranch, on the south end of the fire, is now in READY status. The Kitt Peak Observatory remains in GO status. The community of Pan Tak has been precautionarily evacuated, but is now in SET status.

Road Closures: Kitt Peak Road (State Route 386) remains closed.

INCIDENT INFORMATION: <https://inciweb.nwcg.gov/incident/8154>

Fire Information: 520-302-5120 **Media Information:** 520-497-3625

Twitter: @BLMAZFire **Facebook:** @TON.Emergency.Management or @blmarizona

E-mail: 2022.contreras@firenet.gov

