



SOUTHWEST AREA TEAM 3 INCIDENT COMMANDER: LANCE ELMORE

Diamond Fire

Tonto National Forest & Arizona Department of Forestry and Fire Management

Fire Information: 480-608-2054 2023.Diamond.Tonto@firenet.gov

<https://inciweb.nwcg.gov/incident-information/aztnf-diamond-fire>

July 27, 2023

Location: Southwest of Sunflower **Start Date:** 07/22/2023 **Cause:** Under investigation
Size: 3,657 acres **Containment:** 0% **Total Personnel:** 283

Southwest Area Type 2 Team Assumes Command of the Diamond Fire

OPERATIONAL UPDATE

Yesterday the fire continued to be active where topography, vegetation and wind aligned. On the east side, crews worked to hold the previous night's burnout along Hwy 87 and the Sunflower fuel break utilizing aircraft as needed. On the northern side of the fire, firefighters also focused on holding the burnout from the previous night west of Sunflower and removing fuels along the 344 road to improve its use as a containment feature. Dozers and handcrews also worked to remove fuels along the 1333 road and the Old Beeline Hwy. Last night the dust storm and subsequent high winds pushed the fire north to the 344 road and the area of Alder Creek Spring, however all the lines held around the community of Sunflower.

Today, firefighters will focus on holding the fire along Hwy 87, the Sunflower fuel break, and the 344 road. Helicopters and single engine air tankers are available for water drops to assist ground resources. On the southern side of the fire, removal of fuels will continue to prepare the 1333 road to be used as a holding feature if needed. The west side of the fire will continue to be monitored by air and scouted for future action as the rugged terrain and excessive heat continue to make it difficult to safely access on the ground.

WEATHER AND FIRE BEHAVIOR

Temperatures are expected to remain in the triple digits today. Relative humidity will drop below 20% despite the anticipated 30% cloud cover that is forecasted. West winds will be sustained at 5-12 miles per hour but can gust up to 20 miles per hour. Isolated thunderstorms are possible in the afternoon and may bring stronger and erratic outflow winds. Where the winds align with steep topography and vegetation, fire activity is expected to increase with the possibility for rapid growth.

CLOSURES AND SPECIAL MESSAGES

The National Forest has issued a closure order for the fire area to provide public health and safety due to firefighting operations and fire danger associated with the Diamond Fire. The roads into Orogrande remain closed to the general public, as this area is within the Forest Area Closure. State Route 87 northbound has reopened. Southbound is reduced to one lane at mile post 218.

There is a temporary flight restriction over the fire area. This includes the use of drones (UAS). Flying a drone over a fire area is dangerous to pilots and will cause air operations to shut down. Flying a drone within the restricted area is illegal.

