



Forest Service
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE



Valentine Fire Update

Saturday September 23, 2023

Size: 6,500 acres
Cause: Lightning
Completion: 75%
Total personnel: 201

Start Date: August 16, 2023
Location: 11 miles northeast of Young, Arizona and 27 miles east of Payson, Arizona
Fuels: Ponderosa Pine, Hardwood litter and timber

Highlights: Yesterday, crews monitored progression of the fire along the ridge lines and perimeters. Today, crews will continue with aerial and hand ignitions along the southern edges of the fire. There will be moderate to heavy smoke, pushing to the northeast of the fire over the next week and smoke may push downslope and settle in the lower elevations overnight.

Operations: Yesterday, crews patrolled along the FSRD 411 and used hand ignitions to keep the fire's edge even. Crews continued to monitor along the Chamberlin Trail Road (FSR 200) and looked for good access points along the southwestern perimeter as the fire progresses. Today, crews will continue with operations along the southern edge of the fire, making sure the line stays even along the ridges, drainages, and slopes. Crews will continue aerial ignition operations to increase the interior depth of the fire along Colcord Road (FSR 291), Chamberlin Trail Road (FSR 200), and FSRD 411.

Fire Ecology: One of the most impressive tree species within the Valentine fire are Alligator Junipers. They are named after their thick furrowed bark which resembles the scales on an alligators' back. They are slow growing and often have multiple stems and evidence of fire. Their bark, high canopies, and ability to resprout from their roots are adaptations that have allowed them to thrive in a frequent fire environment. While they only grow up to about 65 feet they can be over seven feet wide, and live up to 1400 years!!! Additionally, they provide an important food source for many birds and mammals at times when other food is scarce.

Weather: Yesterday, there were winds coming out of the southwest along the ridge tops with the fire area seeing decreased humidity. Today will be dry with a chance of isolated showers, increased cloud cover, and cooler temperatures in the morning.

Closures: An emergency closure order for the Valentine Fire has gone into effect as of 6 a.m. Sept. 5, 2023. The public is asked to avoid the fire area. The purpose of the closure order is to protect public health and safety during the Valentine Fire, and to protect assigned firefighting personnel engaging in wildland firefighting operations. Signs and gates will be in place to remind the public not to enter the fire area. Please visit the Alerts and Notices page for more information.

<https://www.fs.usda.gov/alerts/tonto/alerts-notice>.

Safety: The health and safety of firefighters, and the public are always the highest priority. Members of the public are asked to avoid the fire area.

Smoke: The fire will produce considerable amounts of smoke due to excessive fuel accumulation. Smoke from the Valentine Fire may be visible in the surrounding areas for many days. Smoke-sensitive individuals and people with respiratory problems or heart disease are encouraged to take precautionary measures. An interactive smoke map available at, <https://www.airnow.gov/wildfires/> allows you to zoom into your area to see the latest smoke conditions.

Information Links and Contacts:

Tonto National Forest <https://www.fs.usda.gov/main/tonto/fire>

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

Email 2023.valentine@firenet.gov

Fire Information Line (928)-421-4579 • Office Hours: 8:00 AM – 8:00 P



<https://linktr.ee/valentinefire>

