|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Size: 50** acres | **Start Date:**  August 16, 2023 |
| **Cause:** Lightning**Completion: 3**0%**Total personnel: 15**4 | **Location:** 11 miles northeast of Young, Arizona and 27 miles east of Payson, Arizona**Fuels: Ponderosa Pine,** Hardwood litter and timber  |

**Highlights:** The Valentine fire is a lightning caused wildfire that continues to be managed under a confine/contain strategy with the goal of reintroducing fire into a fire dependent ecosystem that has been excluded for more than 50 years. The intended result of managing naturally caused fires are to reduce hazardous fuels, encourage the growth of native forage, improve range conditions, increase species diversity, protect and improve wildlife habitat, improve watershed conditions and restore ecological balance while decreasing unnaturally high accumulations of fuel thus decreasing the potential for future fires to burn with unnaturally high severity in support of the Forest Service Wildfire Crisis Strategy <https://www.fs.usda.gov/managing-land/wildfire-crisis>. A local Type 3 Incident Management Organization has assumed command of the fire.

**Operations:** Firefighters efforts will continue to improve fire control lines and focus on the protection of the many values at risk which include high voltage transmission lines, highways 260 and 512, communities of Ponderosa and Colcord Estates, range infrastructure, wildlife habitat, cultural resources, timber, recreation, and other environmental and social values. Firefighters will take advantage of moderate burn conditions by starting to ignite from 291A/291 intersection moving west along the 291 road to Colcord lookout today.

**Weather**: Temperatures will rise to around 77 this afternoon with continued dry conditions. A light northeast wind in the morning will transition to the southwest by late afternoon. Relative humidity this afternoon will drop into the 24-25% range after moderate overnight recoveries.

**Closures**: An emergency closure order for the Valentine Fire will go into effect 0600 September 5th 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. <https://www.fs.usda.gov/detail/tonto/home/?cid=FSEPRD910473>.

**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:** Smoke from the Valentine Fire may be visible in the surrounding areas for many days. Smoke will be heavier in the mornings as it settles into the lower elevations and will lift as temperatures increase. Smoke-sensitive individuals and people with respiratory problems or heart disease are encouraged to take precautionary measures An interactive smoke map at [https://fire.airnow.gov/](https://gcc02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Ffire.airnow.gov%2F&data=05%7C01%7Cwilliam.dudley%40usda.gov%7C0b0c978334344e2cc87d08dba9b43f42%7Ced5b36e701ee4ebc867ee03cfa0d4697%7C1%7C0%7C638290363923501419%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000%7C%7C%7C&sdata=%2ByGXqREHvfdNK837w9H9RMRWYgJpJ3ab%2BefmOkD6fis%3D&reserved=0) 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**](https://www.fs.usda.gov/main/tonto/fire)

**InciWeb** [**https://inciweb.nwcg.gov/incident-information/aztnf-valentine-fire**](https://inciweb.nwcg.gov/incident-information/aztnf-valentine-fire)

**Fire Email** **2023.valentine@firenet.gov**

**Fire Information Line** (928) 362-0101 • Office Hours: 8:00 AM – 8:00 PM