



NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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TYPE 3 INCIDENT MANAGEMENT TEAM ORDERED FOR SIMMONS FIRE IN KEARNY

Kearny, AZ (5/29/2024) – More than 100 personnel remain engaged with full suppression efforts on the Simmons Fire burning northwest of Kearny in Pinal County. Cooler overnight temperatures coupled with increased relative humidity levels kept fire activity quiet into the early morning hours. A night shift staffed with a hand crew and engines focused on the east and southeast flanks of the fire, ahead of the community of Kearny. Engine crews also conducted structure protection to properties ahead of the fire.

Today's weather of wind gusts and shifts, along with hot and dry conditions are a concern for firefighters. The fire is most active throughout the day. Today's priority for crews is to continue working the east and southeast sides to keep the fire from advancing into Kearny. Structure protection groups will resume efforts to protect nearby homes. For safety reasons, power was shut off to the north Kearny area Tuesday night. Last night two structures were destroyed in the fire. Due to unsafe conditions, fire personnel were unable to conduct a damage assessment.

Fire overhead mapped the fire this morning at 475 acres with no containment. Department of Forestry and Fire Management overhead will fly over the fire today to gather information to better assess fire activity and behavior and view potential fire growth. The Great Basin Incident Management Team will be reassigned from the Rocky Fire on the San Carlos to the Simmons Fire.

Per the Pinal County Sheriff's Office, residents of the Riverside neighborhood remain on GO – Evacuate status. Residents to the south of the Riverside neighborhood and down to Kearny city limits remain in SET- Be Alert status. Approximately 50 homes are within the SET and GO status. Residents are encouraged to monitor PCSO's Twitter/X page for updates: <https://x.com/PinalCSO>. Evacuation status updates will also be sent out through the Pinal Emergency Notification System. To sign up for the alerts visit: <https://www.pinal.gov/1335/PENS---Pinal-Emergency-Notification-Syst>.

The Arizona Department of Transportation has reopened State Route 177 in both directions. For all road information call 511 or visit: <https://x.com/ArizonaDOT>.

The Simmons Fire started Tuesday, May 28, around 5:20 p.m., approximately 4.5 miles northwest of Kearny. Tuesday's winds along with hot and dry conditions played a factor in fast fire growth and extreme fire behavior making it difficult and unsafe for crews to engage in some areas of the fire. The fire is currently burning within the Gila River bottom.

Simmons Fire information can be found at: <https://inciweb.wildfire.gov/incident-information/aza4s-simmons-fire>.

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