



Southwest Area Incident Management Team

TEAM 3 – MATT RAU – INCIDENT COMMANDER



Community Open House in Pine this afternoon Daily Update: September 17, 2024

West Fire - 7598 Acres
Containment: 12%

Start Date: August 28, 2024

Location: Payson Ranger District, AZ

Fuels: Ponderosa Pine, Mixed Conifer, Chaparral

Preacher Fire - 3167 Acres
Containment: 62%

Cause: Lightning

Personnel: 596

Highlights: There is a community Open House tonight from 4 p.m. to 6 p.m. at the Pine Community Center. Residents are encouraged to attend to receive information about the fires and upcoming operations. ASL services will be available.

Operations: Firefighters added containment to the West Fire on the northside along the Rim. Yesterday aerial ignitions were attempted in the West Webber drainages, but higher humidities prevented the desired fire effects. Crews hiked from Camp Geronimo west towards Turkey Springs and ignited by hand back towards the east. Across the rest of the fire area, crews focused on mopping up and holding the perimeter.

Today firefighters will look for more opportunities to continue ignitions towards the west as conditions begin to dry out again. The plan is to apply fire along the Control Road from the junction of the Webber Road to the west and on the west side of Camp Geronimo. Conditions are expected to be suitable for ignitions over the next several days and residents will likely see more smoke.

Up to a quarter of an inch of rain fell over the Preacher Fire yesterday. There is minimal fire activity and engines will continue to patrol and mop up. Repair of the containment lines continues.

Weather: Dry, breezy, and cooler than normal for Tuesday and Wednesday. Highs temperatures 68 to 75 degrees both days. Winds are predicted to be south-southwest 10 to 15 mph. Minimum humidity levels will range between 30 and 40% on Tuesday and lowering to 25 to 35% on Wednesday.

Safety: Two Temporary Flight Restrictions (TFR) are now in place over the area, which includes uncrewed aircraft systems or drones. The public is reminded, if you fly we can't; unauthorized drone flights pose serious risks to firefighter and public safety and the effectiveness of wildfire suppression operations.

Closure: The Tonto National Forest has issued a closure for land surrounding the West Fire, this includes Pine Trailhead.
<https://inciweb.wildfire.gov/incident-publication/aztnf-2024-west-fire-tnf/us-forest-service-closure-order-for-west-fire-09-04-2024>

Evacuations: Pine residence on the east side of SR 87 and east of North Pine Creek Canyon road will be placed in SET status at 1000 a.m. today. Geronimo Estates residents near the West Fire are in SET status. An interactive map is available to stay up to date with evacuation levels related to both the West and Preacher Fires:

<https://nifc.maps.arcgis.com/apps/instant/sidebar/index.html?appid=9bf2ca222ee74f8697bc670ae9c2531a>

To receive emergency notifications from Gila County go to: <https://ein.az.gov/ready-set-go>

Smoke: During ignitions, smoke may settle in low-lying areas overnight. Residents are encouraged to close windows at night to avoid smoke impacts. Talk with your doctor and plan for how to manage your health conditions when it is smoky. Additional resources for how to prepare for wildfire smoke can be found at <https://www.airnow.gov/wildfire-guide-factsheets/>

For the latest news and information about the Tonto National Forest, follow along on Facebook @TontoNationalForest, 'X' (formerly Twitter) @TontoForest or Instagram @tontonationalforest and on the Tonto National Forest website:

<https://www.fs.usda.gov/tonto>

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Inciweb: <https://inciweb.wildfire.gov/incident-information/aztnf-2024-west-fire-tnf> **Email:** 2024.west@firenet.gov