



# Southwest Area Incident Management Team

TEAM 3 – MATT RAU – INCIDENT COMMANDER



## Ignitions on West fire anticipated to continue into the weekend Daily Update: September 21, 2024

**West Fire** – 12,072 Acres  
**Containment:** 39%

**Start Date:** August 28, 2024

**Location:** Payson Ranger District, AZ

**Fuels:** Ponderosa Pine, Mixed Conifer, Chaparral

**Preacher Fire** - 3167 Acres  
**Containment:** 90%

**Cause:** Lightning

**Personnel:** 512

**Highlights/Operations:** Firefighters look to complete their ignition plans on the West Fire over the next 48 hours. Yesterday, crews ignited down the Webber Road and worked towards the west on the Control Road. Ignitions continued along the Control Road north of Geronimo Estates. Overnight crews carefully worked to bring fire down the dozer line just east of Pine and southwest along the Control Road when relative humidities were higher. Firefighters also used chainsaws to remove dead trees around Camp Geronimo, making the camp safer for future public use.

Today conditions are expected to be favorable for ignitions. Firefighters will work to ignite along the perimeter east of Pine and along the Control Road towards SR 87. Residents of east Pine may see the glow of fire at night and increased smoke. Around Camp Geronimo, engines are extinguishing any hot spots. On the east side of the West Fire, crews are continuing to backhaul equipment and assessing needs for repair work. Road graders are fixing washboards along the Control Road to the east.

**Weather:** Saturday will feature a partly sunny sky. A couple of showers are forecast as a possibility through the morning hours that could produce a few hundredths of an inch on rain. High temperatures from 72 to 80 degrees, except 60 degrees on top of the rim. Winds are forecast to be west at 4 to 8 mph with gusts of 15 to 18 mph. Minimum humidity levels will range between 30 and 40%. Warmer and drier temperatures are forecast on Sunday.

**Safety:** A Temporary Flight Restriction (TFR) is in place over the West fire area, which includes uncrewed aircraft systems or drones. Reminder that 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 residents on the east side of SR 87 and east of North Pine Creek Canyon road are in SET status. 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/insant/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>

**Phone Number:** (928)-291-7354 (7 a-7 p) **Media Phone Number:** (928)-291-6528 (7a -7p.)

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