



# Southwest Area Incident Management Team

TEAM 3 – MATT RAU – INCIDENT COMMANDER



## Delay in incoming weather allows for additional ignitions on West fire Daily Update: September 16, 2024

**West Fire** - 4794 Acres  
**Containment:** 0%

**Start Date:** August 28, 2024

**Location:** Payson Ranger District, AZ

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

**Highlights:** The Southwest Complex Incident Management Team will host a community Open House on Tuesday, September 17, 2024 from 4 p.m. to 6 p.m. at the Pine Community Center.

**Operations:** Increased potential for rain may slow the fire today, but firefighters will continue to look for opportunities for ignitions. Yesterday, crews continued igniting on Milk Ranch Point. They added additional fire to the west of Bray Creek Ranch to create more depth in burned area from the perimeter before aerial ignitions began around the Arizona Trail. In Camp Geronimo, firefighters were able to apply fire just to the north of the camp to West Webber Creek. They also ignited to the east down Webber Road to the Control Road adding a protective buffer of fire around the entire northeast side of Camp Geronimo.

Today, firefighters working the West Fire will continue to hold the perimeter lines and mop up around Camp Geronimo. While the weather isn't anticipated to be favorable for additional ignitions, conditions will be assessed throughout the day. The next part of the ignition plan includes applying fire along the Control Road to the west.

The Preacher Fire is now 62 percent contained. Engines and crews will continue to mop up and patrol the perimeter. Repair of the fire lines created to contain the fire will also begin.

**Weather:** Multiple rounds of showers and even a thunderstorm or two are forecasted for Monday, along with breezy and cooler conditions. There remains a high probability of 0.10-0.25 inches of total rainfall over the fire area through Monday evening. Highs in the 70's. South-southwest winds at 12 to 16 mph with gusts between 25 and 30 mph. Dry, breezy, and cooler temperatures than normal on Tuesday. Highs in the upper 60s to mid-70s. South-southwest winds 10 to 15 mph with gusts up to 25 mph. Minimum humidity levels will range between 30 and 40%.

**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> Due to increased fire activity, fire crews and equipment working in the area of Control Road and FSR 440, ingress/egress for the residents of Geronimo estates will be temporarily changed. Access to Geronimo Estates will be from State Route (SR) 87. Access will not be allowed from Houston Mesa Road. All local traffic trying to enter Geronimo Estates from Houston Mesa, will be rerouted to SR 87.

**Evacuations:** 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 smokey. 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