



Southwest Area Incident Management Team

TEAM 3 – MATT RAU – INCIDENT COMMANDER



Containment increases on West to 39% Daily Update: September 19, 2024

West Fire - 8655 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: 524

Highlights/Operations: The West fire is now 39% contained. Containment was added across the northeast perimeter and across the east side of the fire to the Control Road. Yesterday firefighters continued ignitions on Milk Ranch Point and to the northwest of Camp Geronimo in the Turkey Springs area. Crews continued finalizing ignition plans for the Control Road and the control line east of Pine.

Today is expected to be another suitable day for ignitions that will achieve the desired result of consuming hazardous fuels and improving the ecosystem. The plan is to apply fire west of the Webber Road, along the Control Road towards the west and off Milk Ranch Point to the west. The timing of these plans will be determined by the fire's movement and crews are being patient. These ignitions are expected to take multiple days and will likely last through the weekend.

The Preacher Fire is 90% contained. Heavy equipment is working on repair work along the powerline corridor. There continues to be minimal smoke.

Weather: Thursday and Friday will see a continuation of slightly below normal temperatures under a mostly sunny sky. Highs are forecast to be 74 to 80 degrees both days. Winds will be south-southwest 5 to 10 mph with gusts of 15 to 20 mph. Minimum humidity levels will range between 20 and 28%

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 residence 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/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