



# Southwest Area Incident Management Team

TEAM 3 – MATT RAU – INCIDENT COMMANDER



## Ignitions on West fire anticipated to continue into the weekend Daily Update: September 20, 2024

**West Fire** - 9864 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:** 567

**Highlights/Operations:** Ignitions are expected to continue today on the West Fire. Yesterday and overnight, crews continued to implement the plan to bring fire to the perimeter lines. On the west side of Milk Ranch Point, firefighters held the ignitions above Pine to wait for higher relative humidities. Aerial ignitions continued to west of Camp Geronimo and fire is now completely around Camp Geronimo. Additional aerial ignitions started near the Arizona Trail, down the Webber Road and north of the Control Road.

Today aircraft and crews will continue ignitions along the Control Road, west towards SR 87. Firefighters are also looking for the right conditions conduct ignitions along the dozer line east of Pine. Residents of east Pine should expect to see increased fire activity through the night as well as increased smoke. Water sources, pumps and watering systems are all in place and ready for the ignition operation and all lines have been prepped. On the east side of the West Fire, crews are beginning to backhaul equipment.

On the Preacher Fire, repair of the dozer line continues. The fire is 90 percent contained.

**Weather:** Friday and Saturday will see a continuation of slightly below normal temperatures under a mostly sunny sky. Highs 74 to 82 degrees both days. Winds are forecast be south-southwest 5 to 10 mph with gusts of 15 to 20 mph. Minimum humidity levels will range between 18 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 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/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>

**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