



# Southwest Area Incident Management Team

TEAM 3 – MATT RAU – INCIDENT COMMANDER



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## Southwest Complex Incident Management Team 3 Assumes Command of the West & Preacher Fire Daily Update: September 4, 2024

**Start Date:** August 28, 2024

**Location:** Payson Ranger District, AZ

**Personnel:** 158

**Containment:** 0%

**Cause:** Lightning

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

**Highlights:** The Southwest Complex Incident Management Team 3 assumed command of the West and Preacher Fires at 6 a.m. this morning.

### Operations:

**West Fire -24 Acres:** Yesterday afternoon, the West Fire crept over on to the top of the Mogollon Rim. Fire behavior was active but low intensity. Today, firefighters will continue to evaluate and improve firelines with a focus on the protection of values at risk (VAR). Handcrews, masticators, and dozers are being utilized to strengthen firelines. Values at risk include the private lands and the communities of Camp Geronimo, Geronimo Estates, Bray Creek Ranch and Pine. Infrastructure values at risk include powerlines, Coconino Forest Service Road (FSR) 300, Coconino FSR 218, State Route 87 and Tonto FSR 64. Natural and cultural resource VARs include range infrastructure, wildlife habitat, cultural resources, timber, and recreation areas.

**Preacher Fire - 2 Acre:** The Preacher Fire is burning about 8 miles northeast of Payson, Arizona. Today, firefighters will be masticating and snagging off the 218 road corridor to improve firelines.

**Weather:** Today, sunny with a high of 91 degrees and a low of 62. Winds will be light and variable becoming southwest 5-8 mph.

**Safety:** The health and safety of firefighters and the public are always the first priority. Members of the public are asked to avoid the fire area while fire operations are being conducted.

**Smoke:** Smoke from the West Fire may be visible in the surrounding areas for many days. Smoke will be heavier in the mornings as it settles into the lower elevations and will lift as temperatures increase. As temperatures increase the volume of smoke may increase due to the drying and ignition of available fuels. Smoke-sensitive individuals and people with respiratory problems or heart disease are encouraged to take precautionary measures. Learn more about smoke impacts on the [Arizona Department of Environmental Quality website](https://www.azdhs.gov/dhs/divisions/ehp/airquality/).

The West Fire is a lightning-caused wildfire that is currently burning four miles northeast of Pine, Arizona. The fire is being managed under a confine/contain strategy with the goal of reintroducing fire into a fire dependent ecosystem. The intended result of managing naturally caused fires are to reduce hazardous fuels, encourage the growth of native forage, improve range conditions, increase species diversity, protect and improve wildlife habitat, improve watershed conditions and restore ecological balance. This will decrease unnaturally high accumulations of fuels and the potential for future fires to burn with unnaturally high severity, aligning with the Forest Service Wildfire Crisis Strategy: <https://www.fs.usda.gov/managing-land/wildfire-crisis>.

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**Inciweb:** [Aztmf 2024 West Fire Tnf Information | InciWeb \(wildfire.gov\)](https://www.inciweb.com/2024/WestFireTnfInformation) **Email:** 2024.west@firenet.gov