



Forest Service Fire Information Update

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Horton Fire on Payson Ranger District update

December 19, 2024

Size: 500 acres	Start Date: December 14, 2024
Cause: Under Investigation	Location: Payson Ranger District, Arizona
Containment: 0%	Fuels: Ponderosa pine, mixed conifer, chapparal
Total personnel: 122	

Highlights: The Horton Fire is currently at 500 acres, 0% containment and 122 personnel.

On Wednesday, firefighters responded to a 10-acre spot fire across Highline Trail, west of Horton Springs. Ground and air resources worked to contain the spot fire quickly and successfully. The east flank of the fire remains very active, burning in steep and rugged terrain in a remote portion of the Mogollon Rim. Additionally, an Emergency Closure Order is in place on the Tonto National Forest and the communities of Tonto Creek Estates, Tonto Christian Camp, Tonto Fish Hatchery, and Zane Grey Cabins remain in SET evacuation status.

Operations: Today, crews will prep along Horton Trail and continue holding existing fireline while scouting for additional contingency line opportunities. Firefighters are also cold trailing where needed, which is the process of identifying any remaining hot spots and digging them out to ensure the fire is completely out. The fire continues to be a full suppression fire where we have the highest likelihood of success.

Temperatures will remain above average today, ranging from the mid-30s to upper-60s and smoke may also impact local communities and roadways. Residents and travelers are encouraged to maintain awareness as warm, dry and smoky conditions persist throughout the week.

As a reminder, an in-person community meeting is scheduled for Friday, Dec. 20, at 6 p.m. at The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, located at 546 W Ashby Apple Dr., Payson, AZ 85541. Please note that this meeting will not be live-streamed.

Weather: Long term forecasts call for dry conditions through Christmas Day with relative humidity in the low teens, temperature range of 30s to 60s and light winds.

Tonight: Mostly clear, with a low ranging from 25-30 degrees. North/northeast winds at 10mph.

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.

Smoke: Smoke from the Horton 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. 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](#).

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