



Forest Service Fire Information Update

Horton Fire Update - Payson Ranger District

December 20, 2024

Size: 520 acres

Cause: Under Investigation

Containment: 0%

Total personnel: 140

Start Date: December 14, 2024

Location: Payson Ranger District, Arizona

Fuels: Ponderosa pine, mixed conifer, chapparal

Highlights: The Horton Fire is currently at 520 acres, 0% containment and 140 personnel.

An in-person community meeting is scheduled for at 6 p.m. today, Friday, Dec. 20, 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.

Operations: Fire activity moderated yesterday, resulting in minimal growth.

Today, firefighters will monitor activity and continue prepping along Forest Road 300, conducting hand ignitions as needed above the Western Fork of East Horton Creek. Crews will also begin assessing the area along State Route 260 and the powerline corridor toward Christopher Creek.

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.

Closures: An emergency closure order for the Horton Fire is in effect from Dec. 18, 2024, to Jan. 31, 2025. The public is asked to avoid the fire area. The purpose of the closure order is to protect public health and safety during the Horton Fire, and to protect assigned firefighting personnel engaging in wildland firefighting operations. Please visit the Alerts and Notices page for more information.

<https://www.fs.usda.gov/alerts/tonto/alerts-notice>.

Safety: The communities of Tonto Creek Estates, Tonto Christian Camp, Tonto Fish Hatchery, and Zane Grey Cabins remain in SET evacuation status. 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 at <https://www.azdeq.gov/>.

Information Links and Contacts:

Tonto National Forest <https://www.fs.usda.gov/tonto>

InciWeb <https://inciweb.wildfire.gov/incident-information/aztnf-horton-fire-2024>

Fire Email 2024.horton@firenet.gov

Fire Information Line (602)-551-7327 • Office Hours: 8 a.m. – 5 p.m.

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