



Forest Service Fire Information Update

Horton Fire Update - Payson Ranger District

December 21, 2024

Size: 604 acres

Cause: Human caused and under investigation

Containment: 0%

Total personnel: 148

Start Date: December 14, 2024

Location: Payson Ranger District, Arizona

Fuels: Ponderosa pine, mixed conifer, chapparal

Highlights: The Horton Fire is currently 604 acres with 0% containment.

Operations: On Friday, the fire progressed across the top of east Horton drainage below Forest Road 764. Crews conducted firing operations from Forest Road 9305 to Forest Road 9310 to prevent fire from crossing Forest Road 300. Heavy equipment operators also established bulldozer line near Horton Creek to improve access for medical personnel and firefighters working in the Horton trail area.

Today, firefighters will monitor activity and continue prepping along Forest Road 300, conducting hand ignitions as needed. The fire is expected to experience moderate growth in east Horton drainage and onto Promontory Point. If needed, firefighters will conduct additional firing operations, burning along Forest Road 300 and Forest Road 764 to stay even with the fire edge. Crews will prep Horton Trail and continue monitoring values at risk.

Weather: Long term forecasts call for dry conditions through Christmas eve with relative humidity in the low teens, temperature range of 30s to 60s and light winds. Increased humidity and light precipitation is forecasted for middle of next week.

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 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.

USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer, and lender.