



Forest Service Fire Information Update

Horton Fire Update - Payson Ranger District

December 26, 2024

Size: 928 acres

Cause: Human caused and under investigation

Containment: 15%

Total personnel: 150

Start Date: December 14, 2024

Location: Payson Ranger District, Arizona

Fuels: Ponderosa pine, mixed conifer, chaparral

Highlights: The Horton Fire grew to 928 acres with 15% containment.

Operations: Crews monitored and patrolled yesterday, observing continued slow creeping and smoldering conditions across the majority of the fire area. Smoke production did increase yesterday near East Horton Creek and Horton Spring area between Forest Roads 76U and 76K as fire consumed heavier fuels in drainages. No firing operations occurred.

Today, resources will patrol and secure fireline across the fire area, making improvements where needed and extinguishing hot spots when present. Firing operations may occur on the north end of the fire to manage pockets of unburned fuels that could threaten the 300 Rd.

Crews will hold the fire west of Forest Road 76, north of the Highline Trail and Forest Road 76K, and east of Horton Trail. Ground resources will monitor the fire's eastern spread and prep additional control lines and conduct point protection on infrastructure and other values at risk.

Weather: Temperatures will reach the low 40s today with relative humidity around 40% 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. Learn more at <https://www.fs.usda.gov/alerts/tonto/alerts-notices>.

The Tonto Creek Fish Hatchery is also closed due to the Horton Fire.

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: Increased smoke from the Horton Fire may be visible in the surrounding areas for many days. More information is available 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.