



Forest Service Fire Information Update

Horton Fire Update - Payson Ranger District

December 29, 2024

Size: 1,074 acres

Cause: Human caused and under investigation

Containment: 17%

Total personnel: 169

Start Date: December 14, 2024

Location: Payson Ranger District, Arizona

Fuels: Ponderosa pine, mixed conifer, chaparral

Highlights: The Horton Fire increased to 1,074 acres and remains at 17% containment. Increased activity occurred near the Promontory Point area, with fire continuing to move east and south along Promontory Point and east of Horton Springs.

As a reminder, a community meeting is scheduled for 6 p.m. on Monday, December 30, 2024, at The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, located at 546 W Ashby Apple Dr., Payson, AZ 85541.

Operations: Yesterday, crews patrolled the fire area and secured handlines and bulldozer control lines. Firefighters also conducted hand ignitions on the 76L road to keep fire west of FR 76. As the region continues to experience above average temperatures and extremely dry conditions, utilizing firing operations helps to contain the fire within planning area. By doing this, firefighters strategically ignite fuels within control lines to meet the main fire with the intent of better controlling the fire's spread. This tactic is utilized in full suppression fire to "fight fire with fire" and ultimately work toward increasing containment.

Today, crews will conduct firing operations where needed to secure Forest Road 300, FR 76 and other values at risk.

Weather: Temperatures will range from the low-30s to high-55s today with relative humidity dropping again, ranging from 20-30%. Light to moderate winds are expected, up to 20mph. Local weather is forecasted to be above average temperature for this time of year with lower relative humidity dropping below 20% over the next seven days.

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-notice>.

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.

Highway closures are not currently in effect due to the Horton Fire. Travelers are encouraged to monitor roadway status and conditions via AZ Department of Transportation at <https://www.az511.com/>.

Smoke: Increased smoke from the Horton Fire may be visible in the surrounding areas for many days. Smoke Outlook information is available at <https://outlooks.wildlandfiresmoke.net/outlook/>. Air quality information is available 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.