

FIRE INCIDENT UPDATE



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Southeast Zone IMT
Chad Rice, Incident Commander
Media and Public Information: 602-540-1036

Start Date: Monday, April 28, 2025

Location: 21 miles east of Benson

Personnel Assigned: 240

Cause: Under Investigation

Acres: 2,138 acres

Containment: 22%

Stronghold Fire Update – Wednesday, April 30, 2025

Summary: Today, crews will continue to go direct around parts of the fire's edge, including along the southeast side, where they are working to tie in the line established along the east flank near the north portion of Cochise Stronghold Road. The eastern flank is the most active as it burns through heavy fuel, consisting of grass and brush components within Grapevine Canyon. Parts of that area are steep, rugged, and inaccessible by vehicle. Along the south side of the fire, resources are working to establish a contingency line, working up and over to the southwest flank and tying it in with Middlemarch Road. A contingency line acts as a backup or safety net if the fire jumps the main fireline. On the southwest side, within the Dragoons, the hotshot crews will hike in today and work in tandem with aviation resources, if necessary, going direct to establish hand line along the fire's edge. The hotshot crews are working in steep and difficult terrain, making suppression efforts challenging. On Tuesday, crews were able to put line in on the northwest side of the fire in the Cochise Stronghold area. The fire is 22% contained along the north/northeast side. Overnight, three engines patrolled and monitored the fire's perimeter, including within the communities and the western flank.

Operations' incident objectives include full suppression, firefighter and public safety, and minimal suppression impacts to state and federal lands, private residences, and transportation infrastructure. Approximately 240 personnel remain engaged working to protect homes to the northeast and east of the fire and securing the fire on the west side to keep it out of Stronghold Canyon East. Some hand crews and engines are conducting point protection around nearby homes and critical infrastructure within the fire's perimeter. Other values at risk include recreation sites, livestock infrastructure, wildlife habitats, and watersheds. The fire was mapped on Tuesday at 2,138 acres with no new growth reported overnight. The fire remains under investigation.

Eleven Type 6 engines, 1 Type 3 engine, 4 hotshot crews, 4 state hand crews, 6 water tenders, and an Air Attack platform remain assigned to the incident. Aircraft, including a helicopter, Single Engine Air Tankers, Large Air Tankers, and Very Large Air Tankers, remain available if requested.

Evacuations and Closures: Multiple areas within the Sunsites-Pearce and Cochise communities remain in GO and SET status. The Stronghold Canyon area campgrounds and trailheads are closed due to the fire. For updates on evacuations, check with the Cochise County Sheriff's Office.

Weather: Sunny with a high near 74. Light and west wind becoming west northwest 6 to 11 mph in the morning. Wednesday night, mostly clear with a low of 46.

Safety: Due to aircraft use, a TFR (Temporary Flight Restriction) is in place over the fire. Firefighting aircraft and drones are a dangerous combination. Drones in the area could lead to accidents or slow down wildfire suppression operations. If you fly...we can't.

Incident Information: <https://inciweb.wildfire.gov/incident-information/aza3s-stronghold-fire>

Twitter: @azstateforestry: <https://twitter.com/azstateforestry>

Facebook: Arizona Department of Forestry and Fire Management: <https://www.facebook.com/arizonaforestry>

Ready, Set, Go: <https://ein.az.gov/ready-set-go>