



FIRE INCIDENT UPDATE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Lathe Evans, Incident Commander, DFFM
Media and Public Information: 602-540-1036

Start Date: Wednesday, May 7, 2025
Location: 3 miles West of Pima, along US 70
Personnel Assigned: 240

Cause: Human-caused
Acres: 2,290
Containment: 25%

Bryce Fire Update – Sunday, May 11, 2025

Summary: A night shift consisting of engines and hotshot crews conducted successful firing operations along the east side of River Road, northeast of Fort Thomas. Crews stayed engaged in that area all day on Saturday, prepping the road for those operations. Firing operations, or backburns, are used to create a fire line ahead of the main fire. Resources then burn off the fuel between that line and the head to help slow the fire's spread. Overnight crews also burned out around a home and other values at risk as part of structure and infrastructure protection. The northern containment line held through the night with successful holding operations along River Road in Fort Thomas. Due to high winds, the northernmost flank of the fire will be the primary focus and challenge for fire personnel today and the upcoming operational periods. While Saturday night's firing operations added to the fire's size, more accurate mapping puts the fire at 2,290 acres. It remains 25% contained. The Southeast Zone Type 3 Incident Management Team took command of the fire Saturday afternoon.

The fire displayed extreme fire behavior through the day on Saturday and into the late evening with torching and long-range spotting. Resources are utilizing direct and indirect tactics across the fire's perimeter and where it's safe to do so to establish containment line and keep the fire in check. A helicopter supported ground operations with bucket drops to cool down the fire's edge to allow resources to safely engage. Hot, dry and windy conditions continue to play a role in the fire's activity. The invasive salt cedar within the Gila River bottom also plays into the extreme fire behavior displayed over the last few days.

Resources are continuing efforts of keeping the fire out of Fort Thomas, keeping it north of the 70 and within its footprint within the riverbed. Other objectives include firefighter and public safety, along with protection of values at risk including, agricultural lands and infrastructure, mining and utility infrastructure, homes, and the railroad. Resources continue to hold, improve, and strengthen existing containment lines and will be scouting areas for a contingency dozer line. A contingency line acts as a backup or safety net if the fire jumps the main fireline.

SET, or pre-evacuation status remains in place for residents in the river corridor in the Fort Thomas area and for residents between Eden Road and Fort Thomas. US 70 remains open, but with ever-changing fire conditions, drivers should be aware of potential traffic delays or closures should conditions warrant. The fire started on Wednesday, May 7, and by the next day it was 160 acres with 80% containment. On Friday morning, high winds spotted the fire over a 25-30' containment line on the north end. Those winds, coupled with the vegetation type, fueled the fire fanning it out to the north and northeast. Multiple power and gas lines were damaged in the fire. At this time, there are no reports of damaged or destroyed structures.

Evacuations and Closures: Per the Graham County Office of Emergency Management SET for homes between Eden Road and Fort Thomas on the north side of US 70. SET for all homes located in the river corridor in the Fort Thomas-area.

Weather: Increasing clouds with a high near 95. Breezy with a southeast wind 21-26 mph. Wind gusts forecast as high as 37 mph. A Fire Weather Watch is forecast for Monday.

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.

Road and Traffic Updates: az511.com

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