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News Release

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Thief compromises Bert Fire operations and public safety

Williams, Ariz., June 8, 2016—For Immediate Release. On Tuesday morning a firefighter assigned to the Bert Fire on the Kaibab National Forest discovered the theft of essential emergency safety equipment taken from the scene of the Bert Fire southeast of Valle, Arizona.

Sometime during the night hours of Monday June 6, an electronic safety message sign that was placed on highway 180 was vandalized and multiple power batteries were stolen from inside of the unit. The sign board which displayed illuminated safety messages for travelers was rendered inoperable. The messages were designed to alert drivers of approaching hazardous conditions including smoke and fire personnel working in the area.

Officials would like to remind the public of the importance of safety when conducting fire operations that are near or within rural areas and adjacent to busy highway corridors. These types of careless actions can elevate danger and reduce the ability to provide for public safety of both firefighters and motorists. U.S. Forest Service law enforcement is currently working with the Coconino County Sheriff's office and would encourage anyone with information related to this crime to contact the sheriff's office at 928-774-4523 or USFS Law Enforcement at 928-635-5642.



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