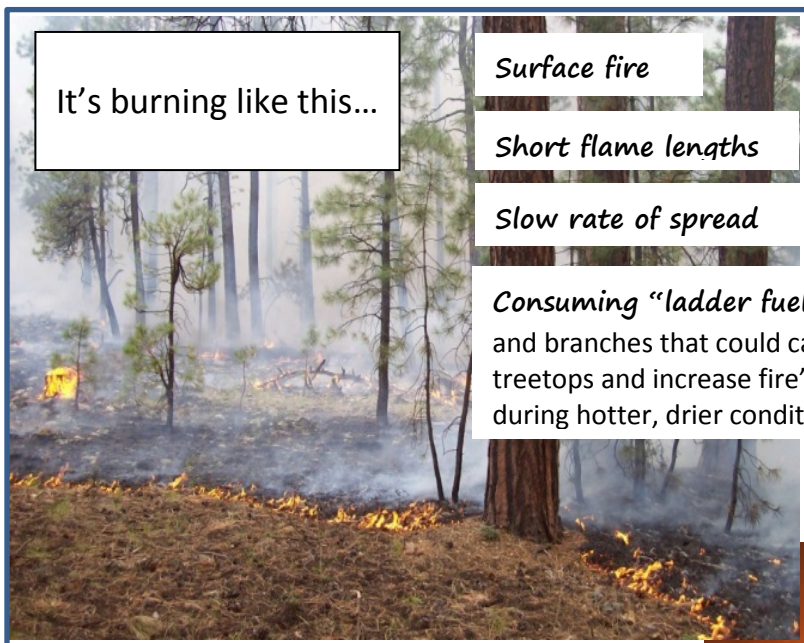
July 18, 2014

WILDFIRE AND SMOKE AHEAD

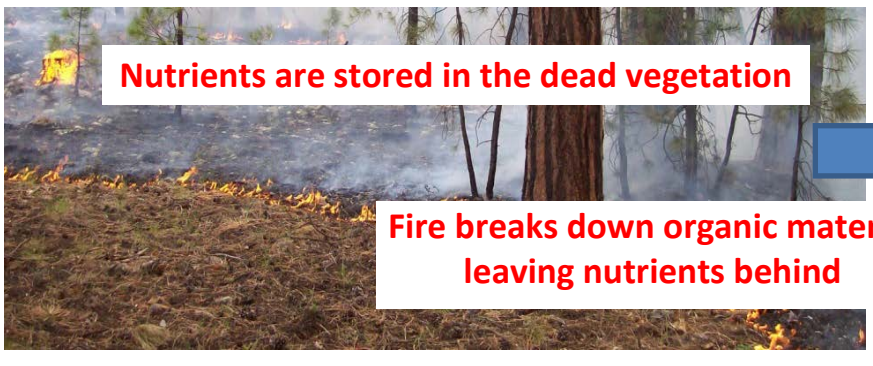
IT'S A GOOD THING – A natural & necessary process…



Fire crews are utilizing a lightning-caused fire to *benefit the forest*, helping to make it healthier and safer

Historically, this type of fires occurred every 2-10 years in this forest – these fires give us the opportunity to reintroduce the natural disturbance into the ecosystem.

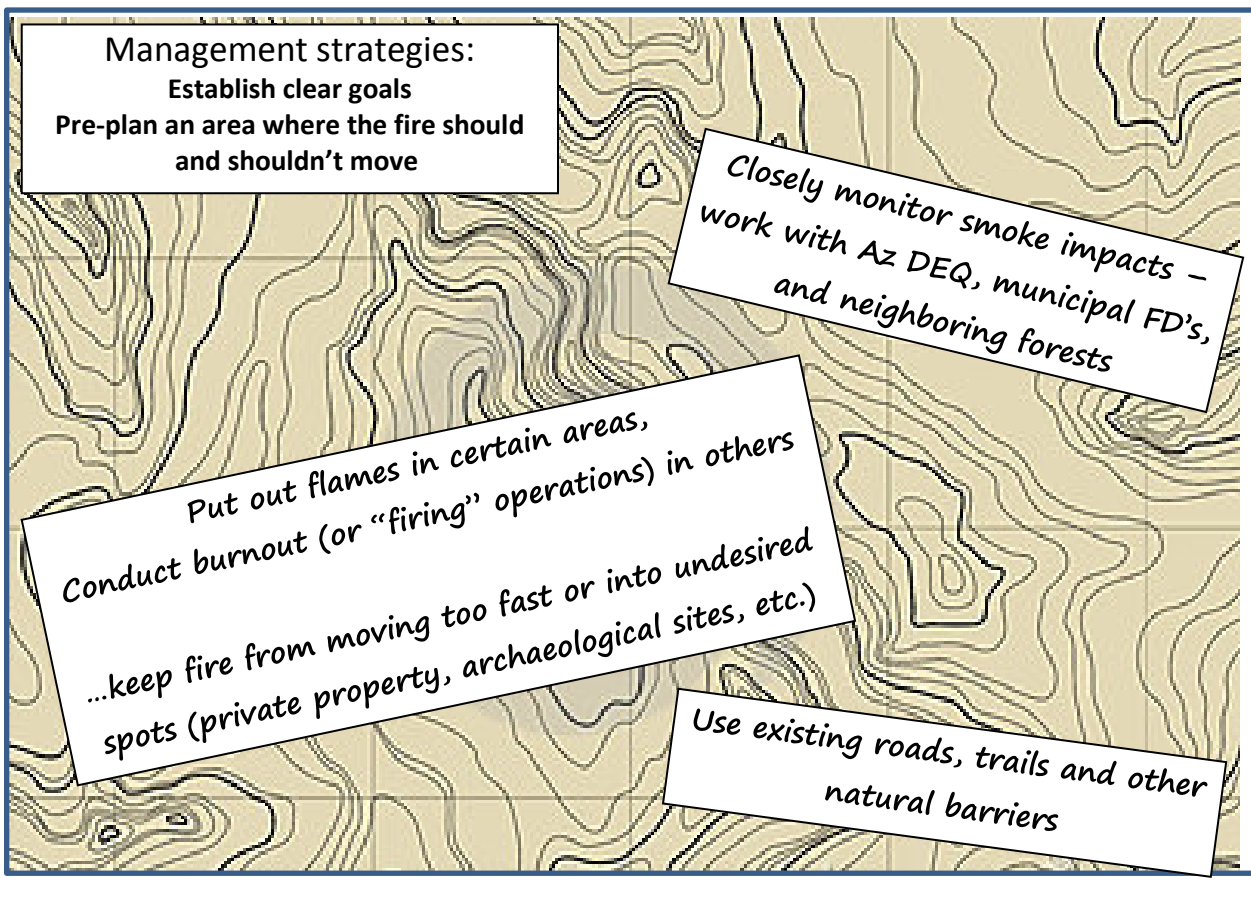
This forest NEEDS frequent, low-intensity fire



RESULT:
Less fuel that could contribute to severe fire behavior

Food for wildlife

- To survive, plants need minerals such as nitrogen, phosphorus, potassium, magnesium, and calcium – nutrients that are usually absorbed from the soil by a plant's roots. These nutrients remain in fallen leaves and other woody debris until bacteria and other "decomposers" feed on the dead matter and return the nutrients to the soil where they can be used again by other plants. But ***these decomposers don't work well in the dry climates of northern Arizona***. ***In this area – FIRE is the agent*** that breaks down the "forest litter" and recycles the minerals into the soil for new grasses and forbs to thrive.
- Healthy grasses and forbs promote healthy wildlife habitat and feeding grounds.
- And of course, removing these accumulated fuels reduces the risk of severe fire occurring during the hotter, drier months of the year = this means ***safer conditions for the public and firefighters.***



The "boots on the ground" are using various tactics to keep the fire within pre-determined parameters – smoke limits, planning boundaries, and speed/severity

Willard Fire Details:

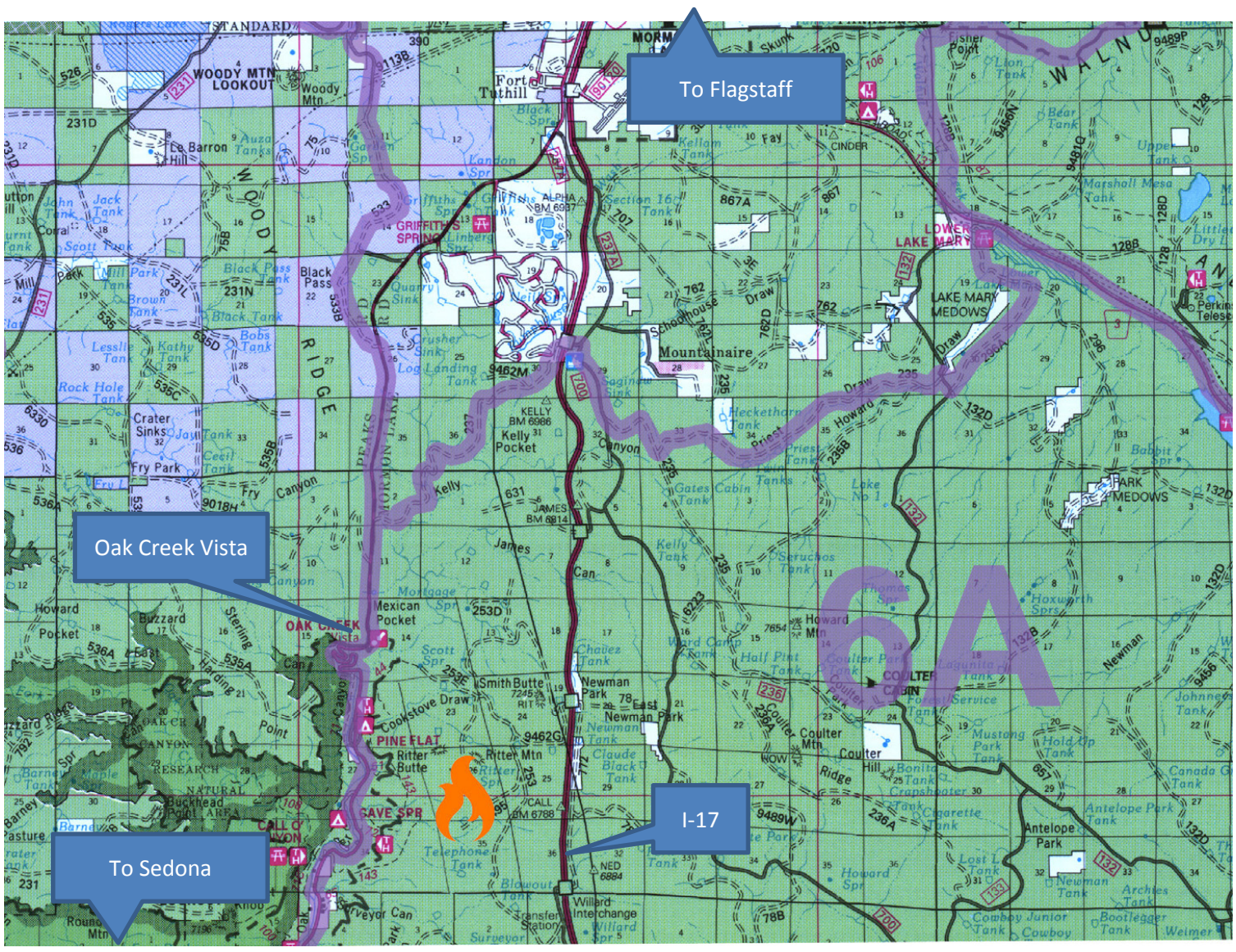
Location: South of Flagstaff between I-17 and Oak Creek Canyon, near the Willard Springs Interchange.

Behavior: Creeping, smoldering

Smoke: Noticeable from I-17, Munds Park, Kachina Village, Hwy 89A, Oak Creek Vista, as well as portions of the Sedona area. Expect the likelihood of it to settle in these areas overnight.

Closures: The immediate fire area is closed for public safety, but no other road or trail closures are in place at this time.

Visitors in the area should be cautious of fire crews and equipment.



EXPECT TO SEE & SMELL SMOKE!!

(Especially overnight and in the early morning hours)

Resources for additional info:

Flagstaff Ranger Station
928-527-8290

Text Follow CoconinoNF to 40404
or
follow @CoconinoNF on Twitter

inciweb.nwcg.gov/
www.fs.usda.gov/Coconino

The Kaibab NF has similar fires in the Williams and Parks areas. Visit
www.fs.usda.gov/kaibab

Other fires the Coconino NF is managing for forest benefits:

Bar M Fire: 5 miles southwest of Mormon Lake near Forest Roads 240 and 91.
Smoke will be noticeable from Lake Mary Road, Munds Park, and Mormon Lake Village.
Contact: Flagstaff Ranger Station

Pothole Fire: 22 miles north of Payson
Smoke may be noticeable in the Camp Verde area during the evening and early morning hours.

General Fire: 15 miles northeast of Payson, off Forest Roads 300 and 95
Smoke may affect local subdivisions in the Blue Ridge community.