

Wallow Fire Update

July 1, 2011

Fire Facts:

Location: Apache, Navajo, Graham, and Greenlee Counties, Fort Apache Indian Reservation, San Carlos Apache Indian Reservation, Arizona; Catron County, New Mexico

Date Started: 05/29/2011

Cause: Human – under investigation

Size: 538,049 acres total; 15,407 acres in N.M.

Percent Contained: 95%

Resources: 4 Helicopter; 5 Air Tankers available; 51 Engines; 21 Water Tenders; 9 Dozers

Injuries to Date: 16

Total Personnel: 991

Includes 4 hotshot crews;

14 handcrews

Residences: 0 threatened; 32 destroyed;

5 damaged

Commercial Property: 0 threatened; 4 destroyed

Outbuildings: 0 threatened; 36 destroyed;

1 damaged

Vehicles: 1 destroyed

Interior burning is still possible within control lines, although none has occurred in the past 48 hours despite very high fire danger and gusty winds throughout the area. Fire crews continue to patrol and mop up along the 281 road and repair fire lines throughout the fire area. The Reserve Incident Command Post will be relocated to Luna Lake today.

From Black Canyon north to Reservation Lake, the White Mountain Apache Tribes is providing crews for mop up, patrol, and fireline repair. Firelines north from Reservation Lake to Nutrioso are being patrolled for hotspots by the remaining fire crews assigned to this portion of the fire. Fire crews are working at least 300 feet into the burned area extinguishing all visible smokes. The San Carlos Apache Tribe is providing initial attack on any new starts in the area as well as assisting in fighting the Stanley Fire. Hazard tree removal is on going along U.S. 191 in preparation for a future reopening of the highway and along Forest Service roads 81, 8056, 85, 88, and 403.

A Unified Command Burned Area Emergency Response (BAER) team (both a US Department of Interior team and a US Department of Agriculture team) are coordinating emergency work on Tribal lands as well as National Forest System lands. They are working closely with other coordinating agencies and cooperators. Crews finished post fire assessments and began treatment. Five 20-person hand crews are implementing BAER treatments and clearing debris out of drainage bottoms around the Nutrioso and Eagar areas. The west side of Escudilla Mountain along Paddy Creek, Hulsey Creek, and Nutrioso Creek, were burned severely and crews have completed debris removal from these drainages. Removal of debris from the Milk Creek drainage will be completed today. Debris removal will be completed along Colter Creek in the next few days. Crews have moved into the Greer area and have started debris removal on the East Fork of the Little Colorado River.

The July 4th weekend is upon us and besides the hazards presented by elk and other wildlife on the roads and highways be aware of heavy holiday traffic in the area. Watch your speed and drive defensively. Remember that the Apache-Sitgreaves National Forest is asking that speed be held down to a **maximum of 50 mph during dusk to dawn and at night.**

Today will be mostly sunny with temperatures near 89. There will be a southwest wind 6 - 9 mph with gusts to 28 in the afternoon and relative humidity will be between 14 - 22%. There is a slight chance of thunderstorms today and a 10% chance of precipitation which could produce gusty winds.

Special Information:

- A community meeting will be held at the Round Valley High School 6 p.m. tonight July 1, 2011.
- Forest Road 281 is closed two miles south of its junction with US 180 but **is open beyond this point to residences only.**
- All Forest Service and private commercial facilities inside the road closures are not available to the public.
- An Individual Assistance Service Center (IASC) is available for all evacuated Arizonans to access information to assist in their personal recovery from the fire. It is located at the Round Valley Public Library, 179 S Main, Eagar, Ariz. The hours of operation are: Thursday, June 30th, 10 a.m.- 4 p.m., Friday, July 1st, 10 a.m.- 2 p.m, Tuesday through Thursday, July 5-7th, 10 a.m.- 4 p.m and July 8th, 10 a.m. - 2 p.m. The facility will be closed Saturday through Monday, July 2-4th.
- Fourth of July fireworks at Sunrise Ski Area and Resort are cancelled.

WALLOW FIRE NOTICES

Road Closures according to Arizona Department of Transportation: <http://www.azdot.gov>.

- US 191 (the Coronado Trail) is closed between Alpine to north of Clifton (milepost 176-253).
- SR 261 (mileposts 395-413) and SR 273 (mileposts 383-394), to Big Lake & Crescent Lake are closed.

Closures and Restrictions:

- **San Carlos Apache Indian Reservation:** Fire Restrictions and area closures remain in effect.
- **Apache – Sitgreaves National Forest:** The Springerville, Alpine, and Clifton Ranger Districts of the Forest remain under a forest closure until further notice. A closure order is in effect for portions of the Sitgreaves side of the National Forest. Contact the Arizona fire restrictions hotline for information at (877) 864-6985 or www.publiclands.org/firenews/AZ.php.
- For the Lakeside Ranger District go to <http://ge.tt/8TsJNQ5>.
- **Gila National Forest:** A closure is in effect for the western portion of the Gila National Forest. Call (575) 388-8201, TTY (575) 388-8497 or see <http://www.fs.usda.gov/gila>.
- **Fort Apache Indian Reservation:** Partial area closures are in effect for the eastside of the Fort Apache Indian Reservation. See <http://www.wmat.nsn.us/>.

The National Weather Service on potential flooding: The Wallow Fire burned vast portions of the White Mountains including areas of steep terrain which will make numerous locations vulnerable to flash floods and debris flows even in moderate intensity (10–15 minutes) rains. Some area streams and rivers are likely to see flows beyond anything seen in decades if typical or above average rains occur. Residents should be aware that area roadways may become impassible due to mud, rock and debris slides or due to streams and washes overwhelming existing culverts and bridges.

Public Safety:

- Smoke from the ongoing wildfires in Arizona will continue to impact residents in the Wallow Fire area including southwestern N.M. For more information, go to the following websites: <http://smoke.airfire.org/sw-outlook> [the PDF of the smoke outlook], <http://smoke.airfire.org/sw-outlook/map> [the PNG map] and <http://smoke.airfire.org/sw-monitoring> [the PDF of the monitoring report].
- A Crisis Intervention Line (928) 333-2683 is available for residents suffering from the stress of living with fire danger.
- For more safety information see: <http://tinyurl.com/6zvcrcck>.
- Apache County and local Fire Departments have begun identifying locations for staging of sandbags in anticipation of the monsoon season. More information will be provided as locations are confirmed.

Residents/Public Information: All persons needing area specific fire related information may call the following numbers:

- Fire information in Spanish: (877) 632-6678.
- Luna and Reserve, N.M., Alpine, Ariz.: (575) 533-6928.
- North and west sides of the fire, including Fort Apache Indian Reservation: 928-369-7317, 8 a.m.-8 p.m.
- South between the Black River and US 191, including the San Carlos Indian Reservation: (877) 446-3368.
- For entry into the San Carlos Apache Reservation closure area contact San Carlos Apache Recreation and Wildlife Department Dispatch at (928) 475-2236 for approval.
- **Website Info:** www.inciweb.org Articles: <http://tinyurl.com/6zvcrcck>, Twitter: www.twitter.com/AS_NF Flickr (photos): www.flickr.com/apachesitgreavesnf.
- Information and assistance for damaged homes and small businesses can be accessed at this link: <http://tinyurl.com/6a94bk5>.

Media: Media should call the following numbers to coordinate interviews with the various areas of the fire:

- North and west side of the fire, including Fort Apache Indian Reservation: (928) 369-7317, 8 a.m.-8 p.m.
- East, Luna and Reserve, N.M., Alpine, Ariz.: (575) 533-6928.
- South, between the Black River and US 191, including the San Carlos Indian Reservation: (877) 446-3368.

Burned Area Emergency Response (BAER): Field assessments documenting resource damages have been completed on Tribal lands and final reports are being prepared. Burned Area Emergency Response (BAER) team assessments continue and will result in an Emergency Stabilization and Rehabilitation Plan, which will recommend priority actions that will be accomplished in the near future. The assessment process should be complete within two weeks. Long term restoration and salvage needs will be addressed after the environmental analysis is finished. To learn more about BAER Teams, go to these sites: <http://tinyurl.com/6xd42mf>, <http://tinyurl.com/5v9p2h5>.