

Wallow Fire Update

June 23, 2011 6:00 p.m.



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: 532,086 acres total

Percent Contained: 67%

Resources: 15 Helicopter; 5 Air Tankers available; 154 Engines; 54 Water Tenders; 19 Dozers

Injuries to Date: 15

Total Personnel: 2,846

Includes 12 hotshot crews;
43 handcrews

Residences: 818 threatened; 32 destroyed;
5 damaged

Commercial Property: 79 threatened; 4 destroyed

Outbuildings: 228 threatened; 36 destroyed;
1 damaged

Vehicles: 1 destroyed

Fire Update

There has been some growth on the eastern and southern section of the fire in the areas of Luna and the Blue River drainage in the Stray Horse area. This was a result of the fire backing down hill and a burnout of a 50 acre island of unburned vegetation north of the Luna River. Military Mobile Airborne Firefighting System (MAFFS) aircraft dropped retardant both directly on the fire line and ahead of the backing fire in these drainages to slow the progress of the fire to allow firefighters more time for line construction.

In the southwest portion of the fire, resources continue to patrol, mop up and repair containment lines.

Today's conditions were similar to those experienced when the fire made its biggest runs. Winds were out of the west at 12 mph with gusts up to 25 mph. Strong up slope/up valley winds are expected in the afternoon.

Burned Area Emergency Response (BAER) Team members continue working in the fire area evaluating soil and vegetation impacts from the fire and formulating plans to mitigate future damage. Plans are underway to obtain large quantities of straw and grass seed and to spread it over the most significantly damaged Forest Service lands prior to the monsoon season. To learn more about BAER Teams, go to these sites: <http://tinyurl.com/6xd42mf>, <http://tinyurl.com/5v9p2h5>.

Power remains out in Hannagan Meadow and portions of the area north of the Blue River.

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. This summer, all residents near streams, rivers, or steep burned hillsides should be alert to flooding and debris flows. 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 AZ will continue to impact residents in the Wallow Fire area including southwestern N.M. For more information, link to the smoke outlook for the most recent forecast posted at: <http://smoke.airfire.org/sw-outlook> [the PDF of the smoke outlook], <http://smoke.airfire.org/sw-outlook/map> [the PNG map], <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.
- An Individual Assistance Service Center (IASC) is open daily 10:00 am to 4:00 pm at the Round Valley Public Library, 179 S Main, Eagar for all evacuated Arizonans to access information to assist in their personal recovery from the fire.
- For more safety information see: <http://tinyurl.com/6zvcrck>.
- 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.

Community Meetings: 6 p.m. tonight at the Round Valley High School hosted by the Apache/Sitgreaves National Forest.

Current Evacuations:

- Evacuations remain in effect in areas north of the Blue River, AZ.

For information for damage to homes and small business:

- For information go to the following web link: <http://tinyurl.com/6a94bk5>

Evacuee Information:

- Evacuees from areas north of the Blue River may pick up their mail at the Alpine Post Office.

Pre-Evacuation Alert:

- A pre-evacuation alert continues in Apache County for Greens Peak, Hidden Meadows Lodge and surrounding areas.
- Residents in these communities are asked to remain prepared for evacuation.

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

- US 191 is closed between Alpine and 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, Clifton and Lakeside 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.
- **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/>.

Public Information: The public may call the following numbers for area specific fire information:

- Fire information in Spanish: (877) 632-6678.
- Call Center: (928) 333-3412, 8 a.m. - 8 p.m.
- Luna and Reserve, N.M., Alpine, AZ: (575) 533-6928.
- North and west sides of the fire, including Fort Apache Indian Reservation: (877) 701-8201 Hours: 8AM to 8PM. Cellular One phone service: (928) 205-9884.
- South between the Black River and US 191, including the San Carlos Indian Reservation: (541) 670-0812. 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/6zvcrck>, **Twitter:** www.twitter.com/AS_NF **Flickr (photos):** www.flickr.com/apachesitgreavesnf.

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: (877) 701-8201.
- East, Luna and Reserve, N.M., Alpine, AZ: (575) 533-6928.
- South, between the Black River and US 191, including the San Carlos Indian Reservation: (602) 803-4270.