

# Wallow Fire Update

June 29, 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:** 93%

**Resources:** 10 Helicopter; 5 Air Tankers available; 87 Engines; 33 Water Tenders; 9 Dozers

**Injuries to Date:** 14

**Total Personnel:** 1721

Includes 13 hotshot crews;  
24 handcrews

**Residences:** 18 threatened; 32 destroyed;  
5 damaged

**Commercial Property:** 4 threatened; 4 destroyed

**Outbuildings:** 28 threatened; 36 destroyed;

1 damaged

**Vehicles:** 1 destroyed

The focus of suppression efforts in the southeast portion of the fire continues to be in the Blue River drainage with the objective to keep the fire west of Blue Canyon and north of Strayhorse Creek and east of U.S. 191. Fire Crews continue to provide structure protection in the Blue River area and continue to patrol and mop up along the 281 road.

On the fire's edge from US 191 (the Coronado Trail) continuing clockwise to Nutrioso, Ariz., crews are working at least 300 feet into the burned area extinguishing all visible smokes. US 191 and other roads are closed because of continued fire suppression and to ensure public and firefighter safety. Hazard tree removal is on going along US 191 in preparation for a future reopening of the highway. Crews are working to repair firelines and fences that were damaged during the fire. Aircraft and firefighters are patrolling for fire and smoke, which will be visible in scattered islands well within containment lines. Lightning and thunderstorms were observed over portions of the fire.

A Unified Command Burned Area Emergency Response (BAER) Team (both a US Department of Interior team and a US Department of Agriculture team) have been meeting to coordinate 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. Four 20-person hand crews are implementing BAER treatments and clearing debris out of drainage bottoms around the Nutrioso, Greer and Eagar areas. Fire suppression crews are also accomplishing repairs to fire lines that are no longer required for control of the fire.

Elk are continuing to create a safety hazard as they are present on or near most of the highways and roads. 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.** Holding speeds below 50 mph, especially from dusk to dawn when elk are most active, will greatly reduce the risk of an accident.

Today's temperatures will be near 84, south-southwest winds 6-9 mph increasing to between 20 and 25 mph, winds could gust as high as 39 mph and relative humidity will be between 7-12%. There is a 10% chance of thunderstorms in the afternoon along with the possibility of dry lightning.

## **Special Information:**

- 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.
- Fourth of July fireworks at Sunrise Ski Area and Resort are cancelled.
- Community meeting with the BAER Team in Nutrioso at 6 pm, Wednesday June 29, 2011.

## 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](http://www.publiclands.org/firenews/AZ.php).
- For the Lakeside Ranger District go to <http://qe.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 Ariz. 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.
- An Individual Assistance Service Center (IASC) is open daily, except Sunday 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/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](http://www.inciweb.org) **Articles:** <http://tinyurl.com/6zvcrcck>, **Twitter:** [www.twitter.com/AS\\_NF](http://www.twitter.com/AS_NF) **Flickr (photos):** [www.flickr.com/apachesitgreavesnf](http://www.flickr.com/apachesitgreavesnf).
- An Individual Assistance Service Center (IASC) is open daily 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. at the Round Valley Public Library, 179 S Main, Eagar, Ariz. for all evacuated Arizonans to access information to assist in their personal recovery from the fire.
- 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>.