



**Arizona Central West Zone
Type Three Incident Management Team
Incident Commander – Benjamin Stewart**



Wildcat Fire

Monday, May 20, 2024 – Daily Update

Location: East of the Desert Mountain Community and Tonto Hills Development; West of Bartlett Lake Reservoir in the Cave Creek Ranger District.

Start Date: May 18, 2024

Size: Approximately 14,072 acres

Percent Contained: 0%

Cause: Under investigation.

Vegetation: The fire is burning short grass and brush.

Resources: 8 crews, 16 fire engines, 3 helicopters, and 2 water tenders.

Number of Personnel Assigned: 300

Highlights: The Wildcat Fire increased to 14,072 acres due to windy weather conditions Sunday. The Tonto National Forest is expanding the size of the closure order due to wind gusts forecasted up to 40 miles per hour this afternoon. Aviation resources were used heavily yesterday on the southeast side of the fire. This resulted in limited fire growth. Continued night operations assisted in additional fire suppression.

Operations: The fire continues to be active on the southeast side of the fire perimeter due to weather conditions. Fire crews are continuing to scout and construct fire lines to prevent fire spread. Fire retardant dropped by aircraft alone will not suppress this fire. Firefighters are needed to complete the fire suppression activities. Additional aviation assets have been ordered and will arrive today to assist firefighters.

Weather: Hot, windy, and dry conditions will persist for the next several days. South winds are expected to gust between 25 and up to 40 miles per hour during the afternoon. This will make fire suppression efforts difficult. The winds are expected to lessen in the evening.

Closures: There is fire danger associated with the uncontrolled Wildcat Fire in the Cave Creek Ranger District. A closure order is in effect for the protection of public health and safety due to firefighting operations. Bartlett Lake Road remains closed. The public is urged to stay away from the area. This is for the safety of the public and firefighters. The closure order is available on the Tonto National Forest website at <https://www.fs.usda.gov/alerts/tonto/alerts-notice/?aid=87558>

Safety: The health and safety of firefighters and the public are always the highest priority. Please avoid the area while crews conduct fire suppression operations. The public is urged to sign up for the Maricopa County Emergency Notification System. The system allows you to be quickly notified of possible emergency evacuations. To learn more about the Arizona Emergency Information Network visit: <https://ein.az.gov/ready-set-go>. Firefighting aircraft and drones are a dangerous combination. Drones in the area could lead to accidents or slow down wildfire suppression operations. If you fly...we can't.

Smoke: Smoke from the Wildcat Fire may be visible in the surrounding areas for many days. Smoke will drift to the north and east due to prevailing winds. Individuals who are sensitive to smoke and people with heart disease are encouraged to take precautionary measures. An interactive smoke map at <https://fire.airnow.gov/> allows you to zoom into your area to see the latest smoke conditions.

Information Links and Contacts:

Tonto National Forest <https://www.fs.usda.gov/main/tonto/fire>

InciWeb <https://inciweb.wildfire.gov/incident-information/aztnf-wildcat-fire>

Fire email 2024.wildcat@firenet.gov

Information Phone: (480) 608-2181

