



## TONTO NATIONAL FOREST

# NEWS RELEASE

*Tonto National Forest, 2324 East McDowell Road, Phoenix, Arizona 85006* [www.fs.usda.gov/Tonto](http://www.fs.usda.gov/Tonto)

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**For Immediate Release**  
**August 29, 2011**

**Contact: 928-474-7900**

### **Horton Fire accomplishing forest plan objectives**

**Payson, Ariz.** (August 29, 2011) – The lightning-ignited Horton fire, first spotted on August 25, is burning slowly in an area approximately  $\frac{3}{4}$  mile northeast of Tonto Christian Camp on the east side of Tonto Creek, roughly located between Horton Creek and the big 500 kV power lines in that area. Fire personnel are on scene.

Payson Ranger District fire specialists are managing the Horton Fire to accomplish forest plan objectives to allow fire to burn naturally in a fire-adapted ecosystem.

Residents and visitors to the area can expect to see and smell periodic large volumes of smoke each day of the managed fire operation until about Monday, September 5. During the day, smoke is anticipated to move up Tonto Creek and hug and move over the Mogollon Rim.

Diurnal air flow in the evening hours will move heavy smoke down the Tonto Creek corridor and may impact visibility on Hwy. 260.

Signs will be posted along roads that are likely to be affected by smoke as the managed fire moves into heavy vegetative fuel loading. Motorists are urged to use caution while driving through these areas and to slow down for firefighter and public safety.

District fire specialists plan to treat about 390 acres from the naturally-ignited fire that is being managed to reduce dense, decadent, and heavy fuel loading and to improve wildlife habitat.

Managed fires are always dependent on optimal weather conditions such as relative humidity, temperature, fuel moisture content, wind speed and direction, and other variables.

A naturally-ignited fire that is managed when the right variables are present provides land managers and fire experts the important option of treating an area with fire under the right conditions, allowing for protection of valuable natural and cultural resources, while diminishing danger to the public and firefighters.

For information about prescribed fire and mechanical fuels reduction operations, please call the Payson Ranger District at 928-474-7900. Residents can also stay updated on prescribed fires at [www.fs.usda.gov/Tonto](http://www.fs.usda.gov/Tonto). To report a wildland fire, the fire emergency number is 866-746-6516, or dial 9-1-1.

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