



## 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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Contact: 928/474-7900

### **Prescribed fire operations planned for Houston Mesa area this week**

*300 acres slated for treatment Wednesday and Thursday*

**Payson, Ariz.** (January 30, 2012) – Payson Ranger District fire specialists plan to conduct a 300 acre broadcast fire treatment east of the Houston Mesa Horse Trail extending to the Mesa del Caballo area on Wednesday and Thursday, Feb. 1-2.

Residents and visitors to the area can expect to see and smell moderate amounts of smoke each day of the prescribed fire operation. Mesa del Caballo will be impacted by smoke during the day. Diurnal air flow will move residual smoke in the evening hours into the E. Tyler Pkwy. area, Chaparral Pines, Rim Golf Club, and the Payson area.

To mitigate the impact of smoke, ignitions will end each day by 3:30 p.m. Smoke may linger in these areas thru Friday. During fire operations, signs will be posted along roads that are likely to be affected by smoke. Motorists are urged to use caution while driving thru these areas and to slow down for the safety of firefighters and the public.

Broadcast fire treatments can continue for several days or weeks and generally are conducted during cooler weather after grasses have dried and cured. Windy conditions are needed to carry flames across open areas and achieve the beneficial effects desired by land managers.

Prescribed fire treatments are always dependent on optimal weather conditions before ignitions begin, such as fuel moisture content, temperature, wind speed and direction, relative humidity, and other variables.

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 forest prescribed fires at [www.fs.usda.gov/tonto](http://www.fs.usda.gov/tonto). To report a wildland fire, the fire emergency number is 480-457-1555, or 866-746-6516.

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