



Forest Service
Coconino National Forest
1824 S. Thompson Street
Flagstaff, Arizona 86001

News Release



Public Information: (928) 527-3600
www.CoconinoNationalForest.us

MEDIA CONTACTS
Brady Smith – Public Affairs Officer
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Media Only: (928) 224-8306

Lightning fires see activity as weather dries out

FLAGSTAFF, Ariz., Aug. 6, 2018, For Immediate Release – Fire managers with the Coconino National Forest continue monitoring and utilizing several lightning-caused fires to benefit the landscape and maintain a healthy ecosystem by allowing fire to fulfill its natural role and consume forest debris.

Information and details about the Surveyor, Seep, Bristow, Platypus, Rhino and Deer Fires, including their objectives, will be updated on Inciweb under the name of the fire at <http://inciweb.nwcg.gov/>. Quick updates will also be provided via the Forest's social media sites, to include Twitter at www.twitter.com/coconinonf (@CoconinoNF) and Facebook at www.facebook.com/CoconinoNF (@CoconinoNF).

These fires, as with any wildfire, do not have planned end dates, but firefighters determine a specific planning area within which the fire may run its natural course. However, this does not mean the fire will move across the entire planning area, as specific edges of a fire may be suppressed to protect certain values such as public safety, private property, cultural sites, major transmission power lines, trailheads, dispersed camping sites, and more. Actions are also taken to minimize smoke impacts where possible and necessary.

Thunderstorms building in the area of the fires may randomly change wind directions making smoke patterns very difficult to predict. Additionally, monsoon weather and precipitation may extinguish any of these wildfires at any time, which would bring the fire to a conclusion.

1. PLATYPUS and RHINO FIRES OVERVIEW (within the same wilderness)

Discovery date: July 28, 2018.

Cause: Lightning.

Location: Approximately 4 miles and 6 miles northwest of Sedona in Red Rock Secret Mountain Wilderness more than 6 miles from the nearest trailhead. (Lat/Long: [34.94291, -111.8701](#) & [34.970900, -111.859100](#))

Current size: The Platypus Fire is approximately 308 acres and the Rhino Fire is approximately 60 acres. Fire modeling indicates the fires are unlikely to grow outside of the wilderness or pose a significant risk to communities or natural resources.



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Mogollon Rim Ranger Station: (928) 477-2255
Red Rock Ranger Station: (928) 282-4119



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Resources: Lookouts and aircraft periodically monitor the fire as needed. No actions are currently being taken due to extremely hazardous terrain and limited risk of large fire growth.

Predicted smoke impacts: Smoke is visible from Oak Creek Canyon, Sedona and the Verde Valley. The Enchantment Resort, Boyton Canyon and Seven Canyons areas of Sedona can expect localized smoke, especially in the early morning hours.

Current closures: Trails in the area are continuing to be evaluated for public safety and closures if needed.

Recent and current operations: About fifty percent of these two fires had activity Monday. Suppression actions are being started outside of the wilderness to ensure the fire does not run uncontrolled. The fires are being monitored by fire managers because of their location in extremely rugged areas of the Red Rock Secret Mountain Wilderness at the edge of sheer cliffs. Any firefighter working in the area would be placed at significant risk, particularly if an injury required rapid transportation for medical care.

2. BRISTOW FIRE OVERVIEW (<https://inciweb.nwcg.gov/incident/6010/>)

Discovery date: July 20, 2018.

Cause: Lightning.

Location: Approximately 6 miles southeast of Munds Park and east of Interstate 17. (Lat/Long: [34.863611, -111.598500](#))

Current size: 3,910 acres.

Current resources: Three engines and miscellaneous overhead totaling 20 firefighters.

Predicted smoke Impacts: Smoke is moderate with good ventilation pushing it east toward Anderson Mesa. Settling smoke during the evening is expected to be in Woods Canyon, Jack's Canyon and may impact I-17 near Munds Park. Both Arizona Department of Transportation and Coconino National Forest continue to monitor conditions near Rocky Park and Fox Ranch Road exits. In addition, there are chances of smoke changing directions without notice as thunderstorms in the area are predicted. These storms could change the direction of the smoke moving it into Sedona and the Verde Valley.

Current closures: None.



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Recent and current operations: The fire is burning well Monday and ignition operations are completed. The interior of the fire will continue to be monitored as it will burn less every day.

3. SURVEYOR FIRE OVERVIEW (<https://inciweb.nwcg.gov/incident/6070/>)

Discovery date: July 28, 2018

Cause: Lightning.

Location: Approximately 3.5 miles south of Oak Creek Canyon Vista, south of Flagstaff east of state Route 89A. (Lat/Long: [34.979611, -111.740389](#))

Current size: 10 acres.

Current resources: Approximately 34 firefighters are assigned which includes overhead.

Predicted smoke impacts: Light smoke is moving east. Expect smoke to be near Oak Creek Canyon to I-17 near the Willard Springs Rd exit. Smoke also may settle in Oak Creek Canyon and Sedona, especially in the overnight hours.

Current closures: None.

Recent and current operations: The fire has dried out some and has more activity. Containment is holding and firefighters are monitoring it closely until aircraft support becomes available.

4. SEEP FIRE OVERVIEW (<https://inciweb.nwcg.gov/incident/6011/>)

Discovery date: July 17, 2018

Cause: Lightning.

Location: Approximately 3 miles north of Kendrick Park, east of state Route 180 along Forest Roads 523 and 9001E. (Lat/Long: [35.463500, -111.752889](#))

Current size: 4,000 acres.

Current resources: One engine is patrolling the area, approximately five firefighters.

Predicted smoke impacts: Light smoke from dense fuels is expected to rise and move northeast. No smoke impacts are expected to U.S. Highways 180 or 89 Wednesday.



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Current closures: None.

Recent and current operations: Fire activity is minimal. The fire is burning primarily in heavy dead and down debris from the 1996 Horseshoe Fire.

5. DEER FIRE OVERVIEW (<https://inciweb.nwcg.gov/incident/6012/>)

Discovery date: July 13, 2018.

Cause: Lightning.

Location: Approximately 8 miles southwest of C.C. Cragin Reservoir and 3 miles northeast of Kehl Springs Campground. (Lat/Long: [34.471194, -111.290111](#))

Current size: 800 acres in a 1,800-acre planning area.

Resources: Firefighters are continuing to monitor this fire.

Predicted smoke impacts: Smoke impacts from this wildfire are confined to heavy concentrations of wet fuels. Overnight smoke drainage may impact the Strawberry, Pine and Verde Valley areas.

Current closures: None.

Recent and current operations: The Deer Fire is being patrolled and monitored by firefighters. Ignitions may resume soon to clean up some unburned areas next week.

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