



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

# News Release



Public Information: (928) 527-3600  
[www.CoconinoNationalForest.us](http://www.CoconinoNationalForest.us)

**MEDIA CONTACTS**  
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## Lightning-caused fires clean up debris on Coconino National Forest

**FLAGSTAFF, Ariz., July 31, 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 Seep, Bristow, Platypus, Rhinoceros 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](http://www.twitter.com/coconinonf) (@CoconinoNF) and Facebook at [www.facebook.com/CoconinoNF](http://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.

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. 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:** 3,100 acres and expected to increase.

**Current resources:** Approximately 30 firefighters are assigned which includes overhead.

**Predicted smoke impacts:** Light to moderate smoke is expected to move east and mixing with smoke moving in from fires in northern California. Expect changes along U.S. Highway 180 and



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possibly to U.S. Highway 89 over the next several days as monsoon activity unpredictably changes the wind direction.

**Current closures:** None.

**Recent and current operations:** Fire activity has increased with drying conditions and firefighter ignitions. The fire is burning primarily in grass and juniper vegetation with heavy dead and down debris from the 1996 Horseshoe Fire. Firefighters are using ignitions in the planning area around the existing road system for containment within the 5,000-acre management area.

## 2. PLATYPUS and RHINOCEROUS 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](#))

**Current size:** Approximately 12 acres. Fire modeling indicates the fires are unlikely to grow large in size or pose a significant risk to communities or natural resources.

**Resources:** Lookouts and aircraft periodically monitor the fire as it's needed because of the inaccessible to firefighters over the steep and rocky terrain.

**Predicted smoke impacts:** Smoke is visible from 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:** None.

**Recent and current operations:** These fires are being monitored by fire managers because they're 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. Any suppression actions will only be taken if the fire spreads into areas of concern.

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



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**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:** 950 acres.

**Current resources:** Resources were reduced to three engines and miscellaneous overhead totaling 15 firefighters. Additional resources will return to the Bristow Fire Wednesday and Thursday (Aug. 1 and 2) to resume ignitions.

**Predicted smoke impacts:** The Bristow Fire continues to burn and smoke will increase Tuesday within its planned containment lines. Smoke is moderate with impacts along I-17 near Munds Park in the early morning hours, from around 5 a.m. to 8:30 a.m. Both Arizona Department of Transportation and Coconino National Forest continue to monitor conditions near Rocky Park and Fox Ranch Road exits. When ignitions resume on Wednesday (Aug. 1) expect smoke to travel east. In addition, there are chances of smoke changing directions without notice as thunderstorms in the area are predicted to move west and southwest. This would push smoke into Sedona and the Verde Valley.

**Current closures:** None.

**Recent and current operations:** Crews continue to monitor the Bristow Fire for growth and smoke impacts along I-17 in coordination with ADOT. Fire managers are planning to continue ignitions Wednesday and Thursday (Aug. 1 and 2) if weather allows.

#### 4. 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. Once the planning area dries out, this wildfire is expected to increase up to 1,800 acres before consuming its fuels.



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**Resources:** One engine and overhead personnel are continuing to monitor this fire until ignition operations can resume.

**Predicted smoke impacts:** Smoke impacts from this wildfire may include C.C. Cragin Reservoir, Blue Ridge communities and the Blue Ridge Ranger Station. Overnight drainage of the smoke 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 to clean up some unburned areas later in the week if there is drying in the area.

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