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UPDATE 9

Bar M Fire crews make good progress, Smoke from new fire near Pothole will settle toward Verde Valley

Flagstaff, Ariz. – Crews on the Bar M Fire southwest of Mormon Lake made good progress creating a solid buffer along the northern portion of the fire area. On a hill west of Long Park, firefighters used burnout operations – initiating fire at the top of the hill – to moderate fire as it backed slowly downslope. Crews also used existing roads as anchors and conducted burnout operations to consume heavy dead and down fuels from the 2007 Birdie Fire.

Today's plan of action is to work toward the west to continue solidifying perimeters. Fire managers are striving to complete the large burnout operations earlier in the day to allow the majority of smoke to disperse before nightfall. The Bar M fire is currently 3,000 acres and continues to burn at a low severity across the landscape.

Fire managers observed little to no activity on the Pothole, General, and Willard Fires yesterday. Some scattered logs and debris continue to smolder.

Most of the Bar M Fire smoke is moving to the east and settling overnight in Long Park and Mormon Lake Basin. Some has also been drifting down canyon toward the Verde Valley.

The Flagstaff, Sedona, and Verde Valley areas may also notice light smoke from the Sitgreaves Fire on the Kaibab National Forest near Parks AZ.

Yesterday a new fire was discovered near the Pothole Fire. The Island Fire is approximately 10 acres and in a very rugged area with little access except by ATV's or walking. This is not a candidate to be used for resource benefits. Hotshot crews on scene will be constructing containment lines and conducting burnout operations and anticipate work to continue at least through the weekend. Smoke from this fire will follow West Clear Creek toward the Verde Valley.

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