



**BRINS FIRE
UPDATE
7:30 AM**

*Great Basin Incident Management
Team 1
June 23, 2006*

Current Status

Hot shot crews, with aerial support from helicopters and airtankers, made significant progress yesterday in Sterling Canyon. The fire in the canyon was an area of concern for firefighters. With air support from heavy helicopters and air tankers, hotshot crews were able to work directly adjacent to the fire. They were successful in building a line around the fire in this area, preventing it from moving further north. During the early evening hours yesterday, hotshot crews conducted a burnout operation that tied this new fireline in to other planned or constructed lines. The Incident Management Team is cautiously optimistic that these actions may lead to containment by June 28.

Today will be a turning point in fire suppression operation. Additional burnouts will be used today, and in the days ahead, to enhance firelines. Residents should not be overly alarmed if they see large quantities of smoke resulting from these burnout operations. Emergency measures are in place to notify the public should there be any concerns for residents.

U.S. Highway 89A remains closed through Oak Creek Canyon. The closure will be re-evaluated on a daily basis. Containment lines are in place to prevent movement of the fire towards Highway 89A. However, numerous structures in Oak Creek Canyon will continue to be threatened until the wildland fire is contained. Structural protection crews and engines continue to improve defensible space around structures in the canyon. Wildland and structural protection engines are strategically staged to protect these structures and address any possible spot fires over Highway 89A. A front-end loader will be used to remove rocks and other debris from Highway 89A over the next few days.

Residents and visitors in the Sedona area can expect to experience continued smoke in the area, especially during the late evening and early morning hours from the burnout operations. These smoke inversions should lift around 9:00 am today. The Arizona Department of Environmental Quality continues to monitor air quality on a daily basis. People with respiratory problems are advised to adjust their daily schedules due to the smoke. Evacuation centers managed by the Red Cross are available for people with respiratory problems.

The point of origin for the wildland fire is closed to public access. An \$11,000 reward is now being offered for information leading to the arrest and conviction of the person or persons responsible for the wildland fire. The number to call is 928-527-3600.

Estimated Acreage/expected containment

3,977 acres. This is based on an Infrared plane flight late yesterday. Containment is estimated at **15%**; full containment is predicted for June 28. Approximately 7 miles of fireline remain to be built.

Resources on the Fire/Costs

Crews: 17 Helicopters: 8 Engines: 31 Water tenders: 12 Total Personnel: 664
Other resources continue to arrive. Costs to Date: \$ 2,225,000. There has been one minor injury to date (twisted knee).

Cooperators

City of Sedona, Office of State Forestry, Yavapai County Sheriff's Office, Coconino County Sheriff's Office, Department of Public Safety, Arizona Department of Transportation, Sedona Fire District, Sedona Police Department, Grand Canyon Chapter of the American Red Cross, Arizona Department of Environmental Quality, Forest Service, Bureau of Indian Affairs, Bureau of Land Management, and National Park Service.

Evacuations

There will be a community meeting for Sedona area residents and evacuees today at 12 noon at the Elk's Lodge near the Sedona Airport. The primary purpose of this meeting is to update the community on the status of fire suppression operations. Sedona Fire District Chief Matt Shobert will also be there to answer questions regarding the current evacuation.

Evacuation orders were lifted Wednesday for the North end of Soldiers Pass Road (everything north of Casa Contenta) and upper part of Jordan Road (everything north of Navahopi), allowing area residents to return to their homes.

The evacuation order for the following communities continues:

- Oak Creek Canyon from Midgely Bridge to the fish hatchery in Sterling Canyon (this includes homes, businesses and Forest Service campgrounds).
- Residents are being escorted in and out by the Coconino Sheriff's Office on a limited basis to retrieve any pets and livestock as well essential items such as personal medications.

Two evacuations centers are available:

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| | <p>Big Park Community School (This location is for people evacuating south of Slide Rock) 25 W. Saddle Horn Road Village of Oak Creek Sedona, Ariz. (6 a.m. to 7 p.m. only this Friday Saturday, and Sunday).</p> <p>NAU Field House (This location is for people evacuating north of Slide Rock) Northern Arizona University Flagstaff, Ariz. (6 a.m. to 6 p.m.) Corner of Knoles Drive and McCreary, next to the University Union</p> |
| <p>Closures and restrictions</p> | <p>Increasing fire danger conditions across the Southwest have warranted closure of the entire Coconino NF. The forest will close to public access and use Friday morning, June 23, at 8 a.m. Closures in the past have proven to be an effective means of reducing the number of human-caused fires. Penalties for violation of this closure range from \$100 to \$5,000.</p> <p>Included in the Coconino NF closures:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All campgrounds, day use picnic areas and cabins on the forest. • All trails on the Coconino National Forest. • All lakes, including Lake Mary, Ashurst Lake, Kinnikinick Lake, Blue Ridge Reservoir, Stoneman Lake. • Cinder Hills Off-Highway Vehicle Area north of Flagstaff. • St. Joseph's Youth Camp near Mormon Lake. • Arizona Snowbowl Skyride. • All National Forest System Roads will be closed, but all interstates, state and county roads through the Coconino National Forest will remain open. |
| <p>Incident plans for today</p> | <p>Today, crews will continue fireline enhancement efforts, including burnouts, in the Sterling Canyon and western fire flank areas. Efforts will also be focused on holding the fire west of Highway 89A, as well as providing structural protection measures for residences and other structures within Oak Creek Canyon.</p> |
| <p>Fire weather</p> | <p>Today will be partly cloudy, with temperatures on the fire ranging from 85-99, with maximum humidities of 8-14%. Winds will be out of the west-southwest with occasional gusts to 20 mph on Wilson Mountain. Winds in Oak Creek and Sterling Canyons will be 7-9 mph with gusts to 20 mph. Transport winds aloft will be north-northeast at 10 mph.</p> <p>The outlook for tonight is partly cloudy with isolated thunderstorms or virga showers. The extended forecast for Sunday through Wednesday is partly cloudy with the possibility of isolated late afternoon dry thunderstorms with gusty winds. There is also a large moist air mass moving in from the south. No moisture is expected. However, there is the possibility of dry thunderstorms, which could produce wind gusts of to 40 mph.</p> |
| <p>Fire and Other Information</p> | <p>Although the National Forest is closed, Sedona and Flagstaff still offer many summer attractions and activities. Visit the Sedona Chamber of Commerce website (www.sedonachamber.com) for information regarding the many things to do in and around Sedona. Private campgrounds and the campground at Fort Tuthill County Park near Flagstaff will remain open with campfire and smoking restrictions. All Forest Service offices and visitor centers will be open. The closure will be lifted when sufficient precipitation is received to adequately reduce the risk of wildfire to a manageable level, and hot, dry weather conditions are not forecast to continue.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ For fire information and all media inquiries, please call the Brins Fire Information Center at 928-203-9648, 928-203-9650 or 928-203-7732. ■ For information related to the Coconino National Forest including fire restrictions/closures and for residential evacuee information, please call the Coconino National Forest Information Center at 928-226-4601. ■ For evacuation-related concerns, please call the Coconino County Sheriff's Office at 928-774-4523. ■ Arizonans can also dial 2-1-1 to hear updates on the fire. Arizonans unable to dial 2-1-1 can call 1-888-GoTo211 (888-468-6211). Or visit www.AZ211.gov. <p>Fire Websites: For continued fire information on the national forest, visit www.coconinoforest.us. Specific information for the Brins Fire can be found at ftp://ftp.nifc.gov/Incident_Specific_Data/GREAT_BASIN_E/Brins2006/</p> |