

# Ground Zero at the Pipeline Fire in Flagstaff AZ Rider

Over the weekend of June 10-12, 2022, members of the Trail Riders of Southern Arizona (TRS) were on an annual trip to Flagstaff for some camping and trail riding.

On that Sunday {the 12th} a group of 6 broke camp and headed up to ride the Fort Valley trails just north of Flagstaff. On one of the last trails of the day, a rider in the group rounded a turn and saw a fire 200 yards straight ahead! A scary sight for sure!

He alerted the rest of the group at the next turn and that's when the action began. First a call to 911 was made. Others headed back towards the fire to try to contain it. Unfortunately, the fire had already gained strength and they found no way to contain it. It was growing rapidly due to the strong winds and dry conditions. The ground level brush was burning quickly while trees were bursting into flames.

Two other riders in the group noticed a white pickup fleeing the scene and the chase was on! These two chased the truck and got the driver to pull over while they video recorded him and his license plate. They called the Sheriff and reported the fleeing suspect.

Back at the fire, the group remained

at the scene until the fire crews (Little Tujunga Hot Shots) and law enforcement arrived. They provided statements to the Sheriff and this information allowed law enforcement to take the suspect into custody.

Unfortunately, Hot Shots could do little to control the fire. All they could do was dig fire lines on the upwind side of the fire. We TRS riders then left the area and let the pros do their work.

The local news reported a lookout tower fire spotter first reported the fire around 10:15am Sunday. The TRS group came upon the fire around 10:30am. In that short period of time the fire had already grown to about 1/2 an acre in size.

By later that afternoon, it was reported in the local news reports that the suspect is now in custody. At this time it does not appear to be a case of arson but rather just a stupid act by one person.

As trail riding advocates, these riders were happy to take action in an attempt to preserve the Fort Valley riding trails and the Coconino National Forest.

This message can't be stressed enough! Fire in the hot dry conditions is not something to be treated lightly. Things will go bad very quickly. Being at ground zero

was very intense and alarming. The incredible heat and rapid growth of the fire was something we'd never previously experienced. Don't try to be a hero and extinguish the fire yourself! Call in the experts as soon as you recognize a fire.

*Thank you TRS member Gary Meeker for sharing this story with our readers.*

[editor: In the June 25 wildfire incident report, the Pipeline Fire was listed as 90% contained, after having grown to 26,532 acres.]

Trail Riders of Southern Arizona {TRS} is 501c3 organization comprised of mostly off-road motorcyclists but also expanding into the Adventure Bike realm. We hold 2 major events each year, a Dirt Bike Motorcycle race in the town of San Manuel (Copper Classic) that is part of the Arizona Motorcycle Riders Association (AMRA) series. Then a Dual Sport trail ride in Southern Arizona (There Will Be Dust), typically based out of Amado or Patagonia. This event is open to all types off road-oriented bikes from 250cc Dirt Bikes to 1200cc Adventure bikes. You can contact TRS at Trailridersofsoaz@gmail.com. <https://www.facebook.com/trailridersofsouthernaz>

