



Coconino National Forest
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NEWS RELEASE



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COLDWATER FIRE INCIWEB PAGE
<https://inciweb.nwcg.gov/incident/6363/>

Coldwater Fire firefighters spot drone, halt air operations

CLINTS WELL, Ariz., June 9, 2019 – The air attack coordinator flying on the Coldwater Fire Saturday spotted a drone within the Temporary Flight Restriction area and grounded the helicopter assigned to the fire until it was safe to resume any needed flying operations.

There is a TFR over the fire area, and it is illegal to operate a private drone near any wildfire. Saturday, the air attack, fixed-wing pilot, reported a private drone within the TFR. Drones near wildfires create a serious safety hazard for fire aircraft and result in aircraft being grounded immediately.

Fire crews today are conducting burning operation along Forest Road 141 on the southeast boundary. In the same area Saturday the incident commander ordered a qualified Unmanned Aircraft System or “drone” assigned to the fire to fly several operations. The drone was used to drop small detonation devices for ignitions during burnout operations in places hard to ignite by hand and it also flew reconnaissance missions.

Burn out ignitions begin along state Route 87 on Monday, which will likely result in increased smoke and reduced visibility on the highway. There is likely to be temporary lane closures and the use of pilot cars to escort traffic. These traffic patterns changes may cause long delays in both directions.

The Coldwater Fire is located about 4 miles south of Clints Well, within 1 mile east of state Route 87. It has burned approximately 5,800 acres inside of the 17,400 acre planned area where the fire is running its natural course.

The fire may not burn all the fuels in the planned area and is being suppressed in areas near homes, structures, cultural sites, power transmission lines, tailheads, campgrounds and other values at risk.

More Coldwater Fire information is available on Inciweb at <https://inciweb.nwcg.gov/incident/6363/>. Immediate updates of notable fire activity and smoke impacts are shared on the Coconino National Forest’s social media sites, which are [Twitter](#), @CoconinoNF; and [Facebook](#), @CoconinoNF. These links are also listed on the Forest’s website www.coconinonationalforest.us.

Remember, when it comes to drones and wildfires... “If you fly, We can’t!”

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Coldwater Fire Overview

- **Coldwater Fire Inciweb site:** <https://inciweb.nwcg.gov/incident/6363/>
- **Discovery date:** May 30, 2019 at approximately 6:50 a.m.
- **Cause:** Lightning.
- **Origin location:** Approximately 4 miles south of Clints Well (Latitude/Longitude: [34.492, -111.302](#))
- **Current size:** 5,873 acres in a 17,900 acre planning area.
- **Current resources:** Air attack with helicopter, a Hotshot crews, two fuels crew, a dozer, a grader and seven engines. Total personnel: approximately 119.
- **Predicted smoke impacts:** Expect increased smoke production over the next few days, with the most significant impacts in the Clint Wells area, including **Sunrise Resort** and **Happy Jack Lodge**. The communities within the **Blue Ridge area** and as far south as **Payson** will also be effected with smoke at times. Today's wind shift could add smoke impacts to **Strawberry, Pine, Payson** and the **Camp Verde**. These communities may also experience smoke impacts in the evening and overnight as smoke drains into those lower elevations. Firefighter, public safety, and ecosystem health remain the top priorities for fire managers while keeping the fire within the planning area. Smoke may appear thicker at times due to burnout operations or as the wildfire consumes larger trees. This is normal.
- **Current closures:** None currently, but a closure around the fire area is anticipated soon. Additionally, there may be times when ADOT personnel will be closing sections of state Route 87 or using pilot car for reduced visibility.
- **Recent and current operations:** Wildland firefighting crews are conducting burnout operations to ensure it remains in the planning area. Current operations are taking place along Forest Road 141, and continued preparation for burn out operations Monday on state Route 87.