



WHITE MOUNTAIN ZONE Incident Management Team Ben Plumb – Incident Commander



Public Information Officer: 928-245-1585

Inciweb

Exceptional Drought Conditions Factor Into Strategic Firefighting Decisions

McDonald Tank Fire: Saturday, May 29, 2021

Location of Origin: 25 miles southeast of Whiteriver, Arizona

Start Date: May 23, 2021 **Size:** 3,576 Acres

Cause: Under investigation **Percent Contained:** 0

Personnel: 175 **Fuels:** Timber, Brush, Tall Grass

Resources Assigned: 4 type 6 Engines, 1 type 3 Engine, 3 Interagency Hotshot Crews, 1 type 2 Crew, 1 type 2 Initial Attack Crew, 5 Water Tenders, 2 type 1 Helicopters, 2 type 3 Helicopters, 2 Dozers, and other miscellaneous incident management overhead.

Operations: An Unmanned Aircraft Systems (UAS) drone was utilized in yesterday's operations. UAS flights along fire lines and down into the Black River were conducted, assisting crews, seeking out heat signatures and threats to control lines, where these threats were then mitigated. These UAS are equipped with infrared cameras and provide command staff with real-time intelligence and surveillance of the fire's activity. The primary objective is to keep the fire on the north side of the Black River, to hold and secure previous burnout operations, and to improve fire containment lines as needed into the Black River drainage.

Alerts: The Fort Apache Indian Reservation has enacted stage 2 fire restrictions, prohibiting all campfires from 7:00 a.m. - 7:00 p.m. The San Carlos Apache Tribe initiated modified stage 2 fire restrictions, prohibiting all campfires from 9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

Closures: To ensure the safety for both firefighters and the public, the junction at Y70/Y30, the Y40/Y70 junction, and everything south of Maverick and Tonto Lake is temporarily closed. The [Malay Gap Management Unit](#) on the San Carlos Apache reservation is closed.

Safety: Smoke may be visible along U.S. 260 and 60 and in nearby communities to the north and north-east. Smoke-sensitive individuals and people with respiratory or heart disease are encouraged to take precautionary measures.

Weather: Today's forecast is calling for mostly sunny skies, with a high near 83 degrees and winds up to 20 mph in the afternoon.

Values at risk: The McDonald Tank fire area includes important lands to the White Mountain Apache people. Firefighters are working to protect the Ten O' Diamonds Ranch House, the Paddy Creek Ranch, commercial timberlands, critical watersheds, riparian areas, rangelands, and recreation and wilderness areas.

Official fire information can be found on these sites.

- Inciweb: <https://inciweb.nwcg.gov/incident/7501/>
- Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/BIAFAAFireMgt/>
- Apache-Sitgreaves website: <https://www.fs.usda.gov/news/asnf/news-events>
- ADEQ Air Quality Information: <https://azdeq.gov/node/7077>