

News Release

Southwest Area Type II Incident Management Team

For Immediate Release
Date: June 27, 2008
12:30 p.m.

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Two Wildfires Burning on Apache-Sitgreaves National Forest

Springerville, AZ – The Hot Air Wildfire and the Bear Mountain Wildfire continue to burn. Both fires were ignited by lightning on June 22, 2008, when a thunderstorm passed through the area.

The **Hot Air Wildfire** is burning northeast along Highway 191 near Hagen Trailhead. Firefighters continue to burn out along the highway, and are also preparing for possible burn out operations on the northwest corner of the fire on Robinson Mesa. Highway 191 remains closed at Forest Road 25 on the north end. Please drive slowly, drive with headlights on, and watch for fire personnel and vehicles traveling through this area. On the south end, Highway 191 is closed at mile post 202 below Rose Peak. This section of highway will remain closed until fire conditions permit safe travel along the Highway. Fire officials can not identify an opening date as weather and fire conditions are unpredictable. The Hot Air Fire has grown to 7,500 acres as of Thursday afternoon. No residences or Forest Service buildings are currently threatened. Four crews, five engines and one helicopter are working the fire. There are currently a total of 121 people assigned to the Hot Air fire. Smoke is drifting east and is visible to residents around Glenwood, and Reserve New Mexico.

All Campgrounds, including KP Cienega and Hannagan Meadow, remain open. An area closure has been implemented, and the following trails are closed: Mud Springs Trail #49, and Bear Canyon Trail #46. Portions of Forest Roads 217-J and 217-I remain open. All roads and trails within the fire closure area are closed. Please contact the Clifton Ranger District Office at (928) 687-8600 for more detailed information.

The **Bear Mountain Wildfire** is burning northeast of Bear Mountain Lookout. The fire started approximately one mile north of Bear Mountain Lookout on the Telephone Ridge Trail, and is burning within the Blue Range Primitive Area, which is remote and roadless. Firefighters rappelled into and burned out around the lookout and historic cabin. The fire is currently approximately 200 acres in size. No private land or structures are currently threatened, although smoke is visible. The fire is burning within the Rhett Fire boundary which burned in the 1990s. No personnel are currently on the fire, however, the fire is being monitored from the air.

An area closure has been implemented for the Bear Canyon Fire, including all Forest Service land and trails within the vicinity of the Bear Mountain Fire. The following trails are closed: Trail 101, a portion of Trail 55, Trail 41, including the area north of the trails. Forest Roads 281

and 232 are open, however all areas south of Forest Roads 281 and 232 are closed. Please call the Alpine Ranger District Office at (928) 339-5000 for any additional questions regarding this closure.

Fire information can be obtained by calling the 593 Joint Information Line at (928) 333-3412 or by visiting www.593info.org.

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