Maintain	This does NOT mean 'maintain status quo'. High Value Resource Areas (HVRAs) are at low risk of adverse fire effects, and many natural resources would be expected to benefit from most fires. Wildfire should be used to increase ecosystem resilience and provide ecological benefits when conditions allow.
Restore	HVRAs are at a moderate risk of adverse fire effects. Wildfire should be used to increase ecosystem resilience and provide ecological benefits when conditions allow. Mechanical treatments and/or prescribed fire may support using wildfire to achieve desired conditions.
Protect	HVRAs are at high risk of adverse impacts from wildfire, though this does not necessarily mean fire isn't needed. Mechanical fuel treatments may be used to manipulate fuels to achieve desired fire behavior and effects, though fire may be difficult to implement. Prescribed fire would generally not be a first entry treatment.
High complexity	HVRAs are at a high risk of adverse impacts from wildfire, depending on ignition location and burning conditions. This should be a transitional classification, with an objective of changing the classification of the POD and/or splitting it into smaller units once mitigation actions are taken. Fire sensitive HVRAs are intermixed with fire-tolerant HVRAs, often with mixed land ownership. The remoteness and complexity of ownership and fuels types means treatments are difficult and/or expensive, so they will take time to implement. Mitigation action and clear communication with POD stakeholders will be necessary to address current fire hazards.
Exclude	HVRAs are at high risk of adverse fire effects. For the Tonto NF, these PODs focused mostly on the Sonoran Desert. Historically, fires that ignited here did not spread, but invasive grasses have created an extremely vulnerable system where fire can cause ecosystem conversion. The primary objective is to minimize ecosystem damage from suppression actions and undesirable fire effects.

0 2 4 8 Miles

N

Strategic Response

- Exclude
- High Complexity
- Maintain
- Protect
- Restore
- Desert In For Boundary
- Freq Fire in Exclude
- Ranger District

POD Boundary Line

- Other
- Containment Confidence: Moderate
- Containment Confidence: Strong

Central Zone
Tonto National Forest
PODs
(Potential Operational Delineations)
Updated April 6, 2026

Data represented is not survey grade data. The USDA Forest Service uses the most current and complete data available. GIS data and product accuracy vary. This map is not a legal property boundary land line. Public lands may have access restrictions. Obtain permission before entering private land. The USDA Forest Service reserves the right to replace products without notification. For more information contact: Tonto National Forest (602)225-5200.
Data Projection: UTM Zone 12 NAD83 (meters) Date: 05/27/21