



**U.S. Forest Service
Chattahoochee-Oconee National Forests
Conasauga District**

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Fire Update

For Immediate Release

Contact: (470) 208-2839

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<https://www.facebook.com/ChattOconeeNF/>

ROUGH RIDGE FIRE UPDATE November 5, 2016, 10:00 A.M.

Rough Ridge Fire Status

Acres Burned: 3,922
Cause: Lightning
Date Started: October 16, 2016
Percent Contained: 10%
Approximate resources: 295

Location: Cohutta Wilderness Area on the Chattahoochee National Forest

Current fire situation: The Rough Ridge Fire showed minimal fire behavior overnight on the northern and western perimeters despite dry fuels and the red flag warning yesterday. An infrared flight yesterday evening showed heat on the northern perimeter as the fire is backing into the Jacks River drainage. One of the management objectives for this fire is to allow the fire to accomplish it's natural ecological role within the Cohutta Wilderness using minimum impact suppression tactics.

Planned Actions: Crews will continue to mop up the fireline from Jones Settlement to Bees Knob. Firefighters will begin to construct fireline along East Cowpen Trail to the North Buckeye Mountain and continue line construction towards North Buckeye. There will be continued work on establishing future lines in the Conasauga River drainage north towards the Jacks River.

Fire Weather: High fire danger conditions will likely continue over the weekend and into the coming week due to the ongoing drought and lower relative humidity across the area. As a reminder, please be aware of the increased dry conditions throughout the area and use extreme caution and abide by all county burn bans set in place.

Closures: Pursuant to Title 36 CFR, Section 261.50(a) and (b), the Chattahoochee-Oconee National Forest has issued a Forest Closure for the entire Cohutta Wilderness. All visitors and Forest users are asked to abide by all closure signs posted at entry points, roads and trails. This closure has been put in place due to the increase in fire spread through the Cohutta Wilderness Area to the West and to allow for public and firefighter safety. In addition, South Fork Trail north of Jack's River Fields is closed, including the 2 to 3 mile section of the Benton MacKay Trail overlap. All roads west of Watson Gap are closed to all traffic except residents; this includes Forest Service Road 126.

Additionally, a campfire restriction is in place for all of the Chattahoochee and Oconee National Forests. The restriction prohibits building, maintaining, attending or using a fire or campfire outside of developed recreation areas from now until December 31, 2016. That means that only campfires built within metal fire rings in developed campsites are allowed. Camp stoves are still permissible. The Forest Service reminds visitors that campfires should always be put out completely and cold to the touch before being left for any period of time.

Fannin and Gilmer Counties have issued a ban on all outdoor burning until further notice due to the extremely dry conditions and high fire danger. No open burning of any type is being permitted including campfires and fire pits. For more information on the burn ban for Fannin County, contact the Fannin County Emergency Management Agency at 706-632-1958.

Air quality: Air quality conditions may change quickly, based on weather, wind direction, and fire activity. Sensitive groups including individuals with asthma, lung or heart disease, children, older adults and pregnant women should take precautions to avoid exposure to smoke. If you feel as though you are having health effects from smoke, see your doctor or health professional as needed. Use caution when driving in or around smoky areas.

Fire Information: For more information about the Rough Ridge Fire, contact: 470-208-2839. Information is also available online on the Forest website, social media pages and on inciweb at <http://inciweb.nwcg.gov/incident/5078/#>.

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