



## West Mims Fire Evening Summary Monday May 9, 2017

**Current Fire Situation:** For the first time in 3 days, the fire was not as aggressive as was anticipated. The fire experienced low, sporadic winds with light winds expected to continue through the night. Smoke became a day-long issue creating low visibility conditions for aerial resources, causing most flights to be cancelled. Firefighters on the ground made good progress in all areas around the fire, with the focus being on securing lines and reducing fire potential. The focus was on the southern part of the fire adjacent to and south of Highway 94. Additional resources continue to arrive for firefighting efforts. Severe drought conditions are expected to continue for the near future, continuing to affect vegetation ahead of the fire. The vegetation is so dense that it is only accessible to firefighters on the ground with dozers. Contingency lines are in place around the southernmost part of the fire from St. George to Moniac areas south to Road 8. Contingency lines are roads and newly constructed lines to complete a solid defensible line around portions of the fire that present the greatest threat of aggressive activity. These lines are fallback positions or "Plan B." They are often located some distance from the main fire front and are reinforced by clearing brush and ground fuels, and in some cases trees where necessary, to create safer areas for firefighters to attack and stop the fire. Removing fuels from the contingency line toward the fire front is critical to the successful containment and final control of the fire.

**Weather & Expected Fire Behavior:** Today's temperature reached 96 degrees with 19% humidity. Tomorrow, hotter conditions are expected with west-southwest winds and a possible easterly sea breeze merger late in the afternoon.

**Planned Actions:** The main focus for tomorrow is to continue reinforcing lines, improving contingency lines, and eliminating heat sources. Firefighters will continue to work with Charlton County emergency services personnel to facilitate structure protection. Eight heavy helicopters and six heavy air tankers will be working tomorrow to support firefighting efforts on the ground, as visibility conditions allow. The Very Large Air Tanker (VLAT), a DC-10 fitted with a retardant delivery system, arrived this afternoon and was able to make only one fire retardant drop before low visibility from smoke settling over the area made further air operations unsafe. The VLAT is positioned in Chattanooga, TN, the closest airport that is rated to handle the needs of a plane of this size.

### Fire Information

Phone: 904-452-4627; email: [okefirepio@gmail.com](mailto:okefirepio@gmail.com)

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