



Boteler Fire and Nantahala Branch Fires Update

Southern Area Red Team

Thursday, November 10, 2016 13:20 p.m.

Fire Information Office, 413-531-4276

Hours of Operation: 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.

BotelerFire@gmail.com

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



Special Notice: Public meeting scheduled for tonight at Moss Memorial Church, 5188 Tusquitee Road, Hayesville, North Carolina at 7:00 p.m.

Currently on the Nantahala National Forest in Western North Carolina, more than 565 firefighters and support staff from more than 40 states and territories are working to suppress 18 wildland fires to protect people, structures, and infrastructure. Winds are forecasted to be lighter today dropping to 5-8 mph, with gusts 10-15 mph, but the relative humidity is predicted to be lower today (18-25%), so fire behavior will continue to be critical.

Evacuations were ordered yesterday for residences along Gassaway Rd., Wesser Creek Rd., De Wesse Rd., Northern Partridge Rd., Big Dog Rd., Long Branch Rd. and Licklog Rd.

Additional crews, engines, helicopters, and air tankers continue to arrive from all across the country to help with the firefighting effort.

Tellico: Crews continued structure protection efforts. They burned out fuels in strategic burnout operations in unburned areas in between the wildfire and control lines and values at risk. One of these burnout actions was near the Tellico Trout Farm on the east side of the fire. Today, crews will work to secure structures as the fire approaches. They will hold the southern line by mopping up and patrolling. Bulldozers or hand crews will cut away and clear unburned vegetation in lines to direct the fire away from structures where needed, creating a more defensible space from the wildfire. Crews will continue establishing control lines to the north. They will work to secure structures as the fire moves north and east toward Needmore Road.

Acreage: 6,839 Containment: 10% Start Date: Oct.23

Closures: Appalachian Trail is closed from the Nantahala River to Burningtown Gap. Wesser Creek Trail is closed.

Ferebee: Similar to actions on the Tellico Fire, crews improved and extended hand and dozer lines yesterday. They scouted for new line locations in the gorge to secure the flanks of the fire. Crews worked to construct fire lines down to Silver Mine Creek from both sides to connect dozer lines. They worked on completing dozer lines on top of the ridge on the north side. Swain County Emergency Management called for evacuation of two residences on Silver Mine Rd. Other residents on this road were advised of possible evacuations to come. Firefighters continue scouting for areas to cut off the fire spread to the north and south. The major focus is to protect structures around Silver Mine Road, Camp Branch Road, and Queens Lake Communities.

Acreage: 2,061 Containment: 15% Start Date: Nov. 5

Closures: None

Boteler: Firefighters used leaf blowers to clear the previously constructed fire line along Nelson Ridge Road. Defensive burning operations around structures were successful. Structure assessment was conducted on the east and south sides of the fire. Winds will test the fire line again today. Firefighters will continue to construct fire line from Nelson Ridge Road towards Chunky Gal Trail. They will improve line along Pounding Mill Creek to Dark Cove. They will continue to maintain and improve existing lines. Structure protection remains a priority.

Acreage: 4,767 Containment: 10 % Start Date: 10/25

Closures: Chunky Gal Trail

Dick's Creek: A 20-acre reburn has started in the interior of the fire. This is the second time a reburn has occurred for this fire. It is likely the result of additional leaf-fall coming into contact with still glowing or hot embers from smoking tree stumps. Firefighters are implementing tactics to keep the fire within containment lines. There are no structures near this interior fire. Crews continued strengthening all fire lines. Today, they will also be mopping-up where possible to 50-100 feet along all control lines, as well as checking and cleaning out of control lines by raking and blowing newly dropped dry leaves.

Acreage: 728 Containment: 80% Start Date: Oct. 23

Closures: None

Knob: "The Knob fire is looking real good," said the Nantahala Operations Branch Chief Troy Floyd, at the morning briefing today in Franklin. "If conditions are good, this could go into patrol status tomorrow." Firefighters continued increasing protective value of dozer and hand crew-cut lines, managing snags (the dead trees that catch fire from the passing fire), and other perimeter control measures. Today, they will mop-up control lines 50-100 feet in by putting out smoldering remnants of the fire. They will also monitor and clean control lines. Crews and security teams will monitor Highway 64 for smoke and traffic hazards as the fire progresses.

Acreage: 1,130 Containment: 50% Start Date: Nov. 2

Closures: Appalachian Trail from the Nantahala River at Wesser, south to Rock Gap. Old 64 Murphy Road closed from its west junction of US 64 to Forest Service Road 67 leading to Standing Indian Campground. Rock Gap may be accessed from the south by going through Coweeta Hydrologic Laboratory. Standing Indian Campground is OPEN.

Whitewater: Fire crews secured and strengthened containment lines. Today, they will improve the lines while monitoring, patrolling, and mopping-up. Teams will continue assessing damage to the trail system as time and conditions allow.

Acreage: 23 Containment: 0% Start Date: unknown

Closures: Trail is closed to the falls.

Cliffside: Firefighters monitored the fire's actions, patrolled, and mopped-up. Today, they will expand mop-up of control lines to 100 feet inside the perimeter. They also will monitor and clean out these lines.

Acreage: 101 Containment: 95% Start Date: Nov. 2

Closures: None

May Branch, Avey Branch, Buck Creek Grape Cove, Jarrett Knob, Jones Gap, Maple Springs, Mulberry, Moss Knob, Moses Creek, Wine Springs, and Charlies Creek: Crews monitored the fire, patrolled, and mopped-up. They also checked and cleaned out control lines. Today, they will continue increasing mop-up distance to 100 feet in from control lines while monitoring and cleaning out control lines.

Safety

Visibility along roads and highways may be limited at times due to smoke and fog. With more people and equipment arriving to fight fires in the area, motorists should exercise caution when driving. HIGH Fire Danger today! NO campfires allowed except in developed campgrounds on the National Forest.

All residents should take precautions such as moving flammable materials like wood or debris piles away from your home or propane tanks. Sweep, rake, or blow dead leaves off roofs, gutters, and decks and away from structures. For more measures to protect your home from wildfire, visit the North Carolina Firewise page at <http://www.ncfirewise.org/>.

For more information, see http://ncforestservice.gov/news_pubs/newsdesk_2016.htm

Fire Restrictions

The Nantahala National Forest has the following fire restrictions in place:

Building, maintaining, attending, or using a fire, campfire, or stove fire is not allowed outside of developed campgrounds where a fee is paid.

- The use of portable lanterns, stoves, or heating equipment that use gas or pressurized liquid fuel is allowed. Charcoal fires are not allowed.
- Permissible fires must be confined to metal fire rings and grills that are provided in the National Forest only at the locations listed at the link below.

<http://www.fs.usda.gov/alerts/nfsc/alerts-notices/?aid=37484>

The State of North Carolina has enacted a burn ban for the following counties: Alexander, Avery, Buncombe, Burke, Caldwell, Catawba, Cherokee, Clay, Cleveland, Gaston, Graham, Haywood, Henderson, Jackson, Lincoln, Macon, Madison, McDowell, Mitchell, Polk, Rutherford, Swain, Transylvania, Watauga, and Yancey. Under North Carolina law, the ban prohibits all open burning in the affected counties, regardless of whether a permit was issued.