



## Great Lakes Fire Update Saturday April 29, 2023

**Hours:** 8 am-8 pm **Phone:** (252) 285-6174 **Email:** [2023.GreatLakes@firenet.gov](mailto:2023.GreatLakes@firenet.gov)

**InciWeb:** <https://inciweb.nwecg.gov/incident-information/ncncf-great-lakes>

**Facebook:** <https://www.facebook.com/nfsnc/>

Yesterday afternoon, a line of thunderstorms impacted the fire area bringing an additional rainfall of 1.5 inches across the northern portions of the fire. The rain along with higher relative humidity and significant cloud cover, will inhibit fire spread and behavior. Containment increased to 40% with completion of indirect line along the northwest side of the fire. As containment increases, the need for personnel and equipment decreases. As a result, some personnel and equipment are being released from the incident.

**Great Lakes Fire:** The Great Lakes Fire, located within Croatan National Forest, one mile South-Southeast of New Bern, started on April 19<sup>th</sup>. The fire is suspected to be human-caused and is still under investigation. It is burning in pocosin swamp and mixed fuels within and around the footprint of the 2012 Dad Fire, which burned roughly 21,331 acres. Previous prescribed burning by the U. S. Forest Service helped slow fire spread by reducing the amount of burnable vegetation. No structures have been lost and none are currently threatened.

**Acreage:** 32,400 acres **Containment:** 40%

**Personnel and Equipment:** 235 total personnel; 2 Helicopters, 14 Type-6 Engines, 17 Type-2 Tractor Plow Units, 1 drone, 1 Fixed Wing Aircraft, 1 grader and 2 Ambulances.

**Today:** Firefighters will continue building contingency lines and mopping up in the northwestern portion of the Great Lakes Wildfire near the Island Creek Community. Road crews brought gravel in to improve Mattocks Road. Firefighters are concentrating on extinguishing ground fire and organic soils at the southern part of the fire. This includes mop up along Black Swamp Road and a flooding operation diverting water from Great Lake into canals to saturate organic soils. So far, the water table has risen at least 18 inches in that area and firefighters have observed water filling up ash pits where fire burned deep into the ground. Raising and sustaining the water table in the Croatan National Forest is crucial to putting out this fire. The southwest corner of the fire, including around Black Swamp Road, remains a high concern for firefighters. Firefighters will continue to identify additional suppression and repair needs throughout the fire and look for hot spots with the use of drones.

Although communities are not currently threatened by the fire, a structure protection specialist is assessing local communities around the fire to develop a plan that can be used in the future if fire in this area becomes active again. He is assessing locations of fire hydrants, properties at risk, safe zones and response times to develop a plan.

**Weather and Fire Behavior:** Yesterday's thunderstorm brought 1.5 inches of rain to the northern portion of the wildfire and ¼ - 1/3 inch throughout the rest of the fire. Today will be hotter and drier with westerly winds expected to become southwestern winds this afternoon with strong gusts of 20 mph. Temperatures will be low to mid 80's and relative humidity will be 50-55%. Showers and isolated thunderstorms are expected to continue

late tonight with more rain on Sunday with scattered showers and thunderstorms in the afternoon, some of which may be severe.

The combination of predicted weather and current moisture will minimize fire behavior and fire spread today. However, ground fuels continue to burn through the fire perimeter. As live and dead vegetation on the surface dries out, the potential for surface fuels to ignite and burn increases. The area south of Great Lake will continue to smolder and burn.

**Air quality:** Information on current air quality data for North Carolina is at <https://www.airnow.gov/>.

**Closures:** Road closures on County Line Road and Catfish Lake Road remain in effect. Updates to road closures surrounding the fire is at <https://drivenc.gov/>.

**Temporary Flight Restriction:** A Temporary Flight Restriction (TFR) remains in place over the fire area; information is at [Federal Aviation Administration](https://www.faa.gov/air_traffic/flight_info/aeronav/detailed_tables.cfm) website. This is necessary to protect aerial firefighting operations. If there are intrusions into the Temporary Flight Restrictions, we must stop aerial operations.

We have had many offers of donations to firefighters. We are grateful for your support, but currently do not have the capacity for processing and storing donations on site. In lieu of donations to the Great Lakes Fire please consider making a monetary donation to the [Wildland Firefighter Foundation](https://www.wildlandfirefighterfoundation.org/).