



Great Lakes Fire Morning Update Tuesday April 25, 2023

Media and Public Information Contact

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Acres: 32,400

Cause: Undetermined

Containment: 30%

Total Personnel: 245

Start Date: April 19, 2023

Location: Croatan National Forest

Fuels: Pocosin and mixed fuels

Air Quality: AirNow.gov

Highlights of the Great Lakes Fire: The Great Lakes Fire on the Croatan National Forest started on Wednesday, April 19. Previous prescribed burning by the U. S. Forest Service staff helped slow the fire spread by reducing the amount of burnable vegetation. The reduction in acreage is due to additional reconnaissance flights over the fire.

Federal, state, local, and private resources such as Weyerhaeuser are working together to help contain the fire. Currently, the fire is 2-3 miles from the nearest residential area. We have a new webpage, Inciweb, listed above which provides more information.

Travelers on highways adjacent to the fire area should continue to proceed with caution, especially on highways 17 and 70 where firefighters are operating. Smoke could linger in the area, particularly in the mornings and evenings. With the change in weather today, we anticipate seeing more smoke due to smoldering fires along with warmer and dryer weather.

Personnel and Equipment: 245 total personnel; 1 hand crew; 3 helicopters; 8 engines; 3 Fixed Wing Airplane; 24 Tractor/Plows

Yesterday: Firefighters continued to improve and connect containment lines around the main fire. Crews constructed containment lines around the spot fire located near Brice Creek and continue to mop up remaining smoldering pockets within the interior. Containment lines were reinforced on the west and northwest sides of the fire between Weyerhaeuser timber lands and U.S. Forest Service property. The eastern perimeter of the fire was patrolled with engine equipment and aircraft but no significant heat was found along the boundary. Smoke production was minimal.

Today: Firefighters will continue to connect containment lines around the main fire and around the spot fire. Containment lines will also be reinforced between Weyerhaeuser timber tracts, private timber tracts, and the U. S. Forest Service property. These lines will be a combination of direct and indirect firelines which will “build a defensible box” around the fire to help both now and in the future. Firefighters and air assets will patrol and monitor any areas which are not showing any fire activity. If winds shift during the day, resources will be relocated as necessary based on needs and weather conditions. Personnel are also working to repair and improve Little Road.

Weather and Fire Behavior: Monday’s weather stayed mostly cloudy with sparse rain scattered throughout the day. Cooler temperatures and light winds supported mild fire behavior, however some areas in the interior continue to smolder. Tuesday’s weather is predicted to be sunny with temperatures near 70 degrees, relative humidity near 30%, and light winds from the Northeast.

Evacuations: No evacuations have been necessary to this point. All evacuations will be ordered by the local Emergency Management/Services Coordinators office.

Road Closures: Portions of Catfish Lake Road and County Line Road remain closed for the safety of travelers and firefighters. All road closures are controlled by local authorities in conjunction with the NC Department of Transportation. Road closures related to the wildfire can be found by searching under Craven County on DriveNC.gov.

Flight Restrictions: A Temporary Flight Restriction (TFR) remains in place over the fire area; information can be found at [Federal Aviation Administration](#) website. This is necessary to protect aerial operations. If there are intrusions into the Temporary Flight Restrictions, we must stop aerial operations.