



Major Fire Daily Update

May 18, 2023

Release Time: 1030am



Acres: 3974 acres (as of 5/18/2023)

Percent Containment: 25%

Start Date: April 27, 2023

Cause: Lightning

Jurisdiction: Ocala National Forest & Juniper Prairie Wilderness Area

Resources: 174 personnel including 1 handcrew, 4 engines, 1 dozer, and 5 helicopters

Highlights: Afternoon high temperatures around 90 with widely scattered afternoon thunderstorms forecast. Winds will be lighter and from west to southwest today. Westerly winds pushed the fire to the east toward SR 19, and some fire suppression resources were reassigned to areas along SR 19. Crews will be monitoring for hot spots, assessing structure protection, and building contingency lines. Air resources will be used to cool areas where fire is most active. Fire behavior will likely be reduced slightly with lighter winds, higher humidity, and lower temperatures. Crews are ready to respond to new fire starts with the potential of lightning in the area. Additional fire suppression resources are ordered and continue to arrive. Containment decreased to 25% due to fire spread yesterday.

Current Status: Fire activity increased Wednesday afternoon as expected due to drier fuels, westerly winds, and higher temperatures. Fire spread east toward Silver Glen Springs and State Road 19 was closed as burnout operations were conducted along FRS 46 and along SR 19 from FRS 46 to the Sweetwater Cabin area. Crews will be monitoring for flareups along the fire perimeter, reinforcing fireline along SR 19, and working on structure protection and contingency lines around residential areas. Protection for historical and cultural resources, recreational areas, and residential properties in the Juniper Springs, Pat's Island, Sweetwater Cabin, Juniper Wayside, and Silver Glen areas continue to be a priority.

Fire behavior will be reduced slightly today with cooler temperatures, higher humidity, and lighter winds. The possibility of new fire starts continues as thunderstorm activity remains forecast for the next several days. Shrubs have dried out, so all fuel types are available to burn.

Weather: High temperatures are forecast around 90 with lows near 70. Winds will be from the west to southwest at 5 to 8 mph with gusts to 12 mph. Widely scattered thunderstorms are forecast this afternoon and remain in the forecast for the next few days. Thunderstorms can be accompanied by gusty and erratic winds.

Ocala National Forest & Juniper Prairie Wilderness Temporary Area Closures: Closures are in effect for the Juniper Prairie Wilderness including the Florida National Scenic Trail between SR40 and National Forest System Road (NFS) 50. National Forest System Roads (NFS) 33 between State Road 40 and NFS 50; NFS 46 from NFS 33 to State Road 19; and NFS 50 from NFS 33 to State Road 19 are closed. [Closure Information available here.](#)

Juniper Recreation and Hopkins Campground areas remain open at this time. Travel by residents, landowners, concessionaires, first responders, and permit holders (case-by-case) is permitted on NFS 50 east of Hopkins Campground.

SR 19 is closed between County Road 314 and SR 40 and traffic is being detoured onto CR 314 between SR 19 and SR 40.

Air Quality Outlook: Air quality in the vicinity of the fire is expected to be **Good** for the next 48 hours. [Smoke Outlook available here.](#)

Fire Information

Office Hours: 8:00 AM – 8:00 PM EDT Phone: 352-448-0665

Email: 2023.major@firenet.gov

Inciweb: <https://inciweb.wildfire.gov/incident-information/flfnf-major>

Facebook: <https://facebook.com/NationalForestsInFlorida>

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