



Forest Service News Release

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www.fs.usda.gov/gwj

Matts Creek Fire Update - Wednesday, November 15

Current Status: The Matts Creek Fire is 5 miles southeast of Glasgow, Virginia and 5 miles northwest of Big Island, Virginia. The fire is located south of US-501 and the James River within the James River Face Wilderness on the Jefferson National Forest.

The entire fire is on National Forest lands, there are no structures threatened.

Estimated Acreage: 1400 acres

County: Bedford County

Containment: 0% contained

Date and Cause Reported: The fire was reported on Sunday, November 12, 2023. The cause of this fire is undetermined.

Resources on the Fire: Approximately 80 firefighters and support staff, this includes 4 fire crews, 1 type-6 engine, and 3 Type 1 helicopters.

Incident Objectives:

- Safety of the public, firefighters, and aviation resources is always the number one priority.
- Protect and minimize threats to all private property and other identified properties in and around Hunt Club Road (FSR54) and Peters Creek Road (SR600) in Bedford County utilizing manmade features such as trail systems, roads, and other natural barriers.

Smoke and Air Quality: Winds will be light today so smoke may occur in nearby communities. For information on air quality visit www.AirNow.gov

Cooperators: National Park Service-Blue Ridge Parkway, Bedford County Fire & Rescue, Amherst County Public Safety, Rockbridge County Fire-Rescue & Emergency Management, Virginia Department of Transportation, Virginia Department of Forestry.

Wilderness Area Closures: The James River Face Wilderness and all associated trails, including a section of Appalachian National Scenic Trail, are closed to all public use due to the on-going wildland fire.

The following areas are temporarily closed to allow for public and fire fighter safety:

- Appalachian Trail (FT #1) from James River Foot Bridge to Petite's Gap Road (FR #35)
- James River Foot Bridge Parking Lot

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Wilderness Trail Closures Continued-

- Matts Creek Trail (FT #4/Old A.T.)
- Piney Ridge Trail (FT #2)
- Balcony Falls Trail (FT #7)
- Gunther Ridge Trail (FT #8)
- Belfast Trail (FT #9)
- Sulphur Springs Trail (FT# 3001)

Use caution and obey all road signs for your safety. Motorists should be alert for firefighter vehicles and smoke.

Fire Restrictions:

Stage 1 Fire Restrictions in effect: For the protection of public health and safety, the following acts are prohibited on all lands administered by George Washington & Jefferson National Forest.

1. Building, maintaining, attending, or using a fire or campfire outside of developed recreation sites.
2. Possessing, discharging, or using any kind of firework or other pyrotechnic device.

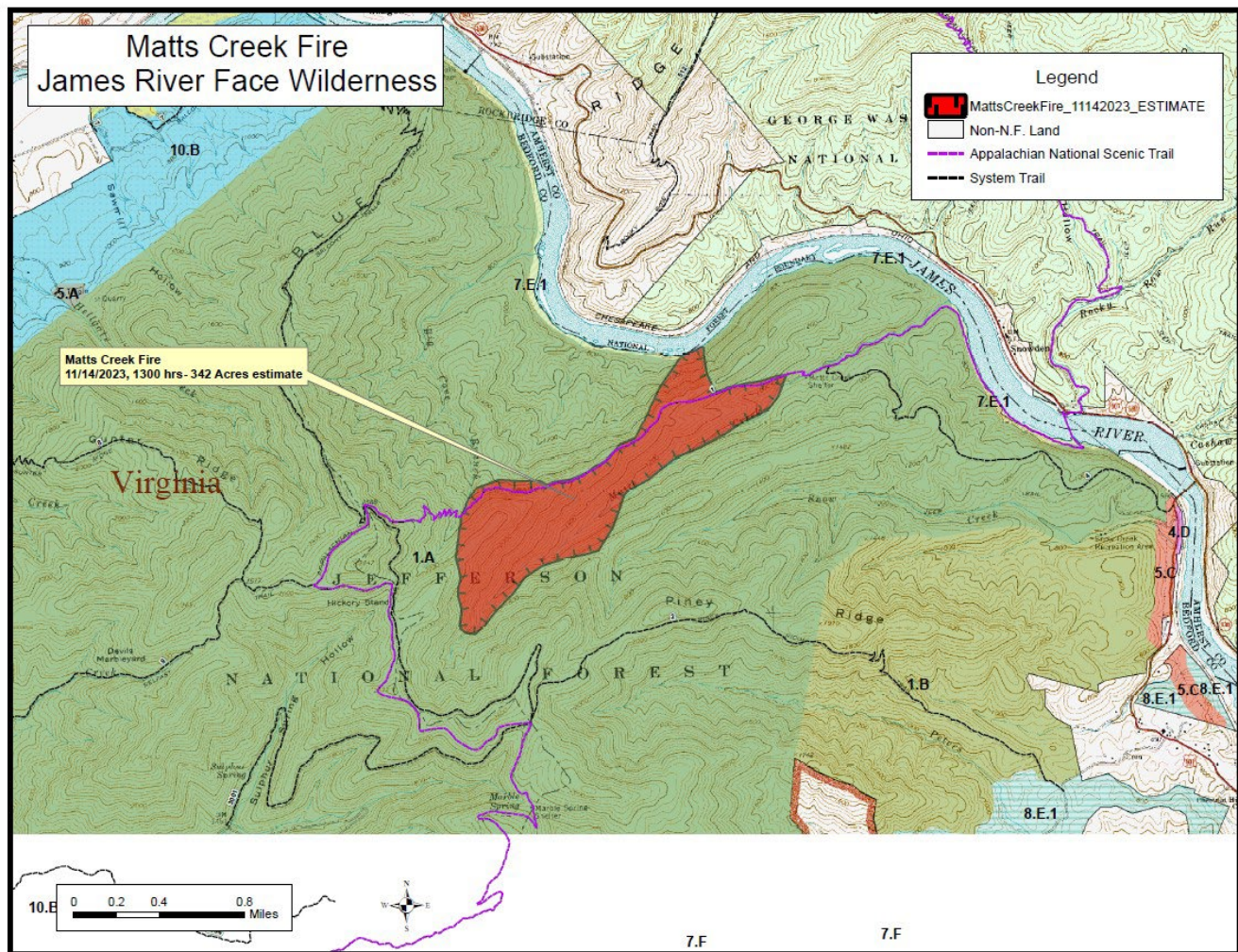
Campfires in a Forest Service provided metal fire pit, ring or grill at a developed recreation site are allowed.

General Fire Information:

- Safety of the public and firefighters is always the number one priority when dealing with wildfires.
- Homeowners can learn how to make their homes less susceptible to wildfires by visiting: www.firewise.org

For fire updates: <https://inciweb.wildfire.gov/incident-information/vavaf-matts-creek-fire>

Visit forest information for the George Washington & Jefferson National Forests website www.fs.usda.gov/gwj or follow us on Facebook: www.facebook.com/GWJNF



Matts Creek Fire Update from 1:00 p.m. USDA Forest Service image.