

Collett Ridge Fire

Daily Update – Monday, November 13, 2023

Southern Area Blue CIMT



Information: Hours: 8:00 AM – 8:00 PM

Phone: 828-820-2714

Email: 2023.collettridge@firenet.gov

5,335 acres | 55% containment | 271 personnel assigned

Highlights: Weather continued to play an important role in assisting firefighters in increasing containment on the fire yesterday. A drone was used to conduct aerial reconnaissance to identify heat signatures within the fire area: heat sources from larger smoldering fuels, such as snags, stumps, and dead-and-down trees, were identified well inside the fire perimeter. Hand line work will continue along Polecat Branch to connect with the containment line along the southern edge of the fire. Firefighters will be reducing forest fuels around residences in the Whispering Pines area as a protection measure. Crews continue to patrol the northern, eastern, and southern edges of the fire area and perform mop-up operations, extinguishing any lingering hotspots, as needed.

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

Inciweb: <https://inciweb.nwcg.gov/incident-information/ncncf-2023-collett-ridge-fire>

Resources assigned to the fire include four 20-person hand crews, Type 4 and 6 Engines; Dozers; and Water Tenders. Three helicopters are also assigned.

Weather & Fire Behavior: High pressure is forecast to nose its way into the area from the northeast today and Tuesday with a period of drying. Temperatures over the next two days are expected to warm into the 60s. It will continue to be rather cool at night with lows in the 30s. Humidity minimums should dip into the 30-45% range today and 25-40% on Tuesday. Wind speeds will increase to 5 to 10 mph today, and 10-15 mph across the ridges tonight. Humidity recovery along the ridges tonight may be poor.

Until sufficient precipitation occurs on the fire, expect areas of isolated smoldering, primarily in heavy woody fuels such as log ends and snags. Timber litter fuels may continue to burn with high relative humidity. Heavy fuel concentrations will retain heat and serve as future heat sources. The primary fire behavior characteristic for the day continues to be isolated smoldering. Smoldering leaf litter may “kindle to flame” with little wind and/or sunshine and burning snags may fall into fresh fuels.

Air Quality: Smoke may occur in nearby communities. Air quality information provided by the North Carolina Department of Environmental Quality is available at airquality.climate.ncsu.edu/.

Burn Bans: Due to increased fire risk, the N.C. Forest Service has issued a ban on all open burning until further notice in several counties in western North Carolina. For more information visit https://www.ncforestservice.gov/fire_control/sit_report.htm

The U.S. Forest Service has implemented fire restrictions across the Pisgah and Nantahala National Forests. To view the closure order visit www.fs.usda.gov/alerts/nfsnc/alerts-notice

Temporary Flight Restriction: A Temporary Flight Restriction (TFR) is in place over the Collett Ridge Fire area. If you fly, we can't. Aircraft or drone intrusions into the restricted airspace endangers aircrews conducting fire operations and aerial resources are grounded for safety. This unnecessarily places aircrews and ground fire crews at risk in a dynamic and dangerous fire environment.

Closures: For public and firefighter safety the following road and area closures are in effect due to increased fire activity and suppression operations in the area from Big Stamp east to Shinbone Ridge to Signal Bald and a road closure is in effect from the intersection of Little Fires Creek Road, 340B, and Fires Creek Road, 340. The Rim Trail is temporarily closed for approximately 7 miles from Big Stamp to Shinbone.

####