

Collett Ridge Fire
Daily Update – Thursday, November 16, 2023
Southern Area Blue CIMT



Information: Hours: 8:00 AM – 8:00 PM

Phone: 828-820-2714

Email: 2023.collettridge@firenet.gov

5,447 acres | 80% containment | 232 personnel assigned

Highlights: Isolated sources of heat flared up yesterday along the northwest flank of the fire as fuels continued to dry out, with fire creeping downslope through forest floor fuels, producing visible flames and an increased volume of smoke. As a result, firefighters conducted tactical firing operations along the containment lines on McClelland Creek Road and Snider Road, removing available fuels from the fire and providing additional security for area residences. Fuel reduction activities will continue around residences in the area, and aerial resources will continue to conduct water drops 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 two 20-person handcrews, 8 Engines, and 1 dozer. Aerial resources include two helicopters.

Weather & Fire Behavior: High pressure over the region will maintain fair weather but with variable amounts of cloud cover. Dewpoints are on the increase so the relative humidity minimums will be higher today compared to yesterday. A few sprinkles can't be ruled out but the chance for measurable rainfall is very low. Temperatures are forecast to be warmer with highs in the 60s with gusty winds along the ridges.

Surface fuels have become dry enough to support conditional fire spread where a heat source is present. Until sufficient precipitation occurs, expect areas of isolated smoldering, primarily in heavy woody fuels, such as log ends, snags, and stumps. 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 a little wind and/or sunshine, and burning snags may fall into fresh fuels, such as newly fallen leaves.

Air Quality: Smoke will be present for the next few days until the inversion layer lifts or an increase in moisture occurs, with air quality expected to be between Moderate and Unhealthy for Sensitive Groups. 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-notices

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.