

**Collett Ridge Fire**  
**Daily Update – Friday, November 17, 2023**  
**Southern Area Blue CIMT**



**Information:** Hours: 8:00 AM – 8:00 PM Phone: 828-820-2714 Email: [2023.collettridge@firenet.gov](mailto:2023.collettridge@firenet.gov)

5,505 acres | 80% containment | 223 personnel assigned

**Highlights:** This will be the final update on the Collett Ridge Fire from the Southern Area Incident Management Team Blue Team. The National Forests of North Carolina will assume command of the incident on Saturday, November 18. Crews will continue to monitor and patrol, perform mop-up operations, such as extinguishing any lingering hotspots, and remain available to respond to any new fires. Smoke will continue to be visible as forest floor fuels and snags continue to smolder.

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

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

Resources assigned to the fire include one 20-person handcrew, 1 engine, and 1 dozer. Aerial resources include two helicopters.

**Weather & Fire Behavior:** A cold front will approach the region today. Winds will shift from the southeast this morning to the west this afternoon. Clouds will gradually increase with an opportunity for showers, with the best chance for wetting showers tonight with amounts of a tenth of an inch or less. Skies will clear for the weekend with fair weather on Saturday and Sunday.

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

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