



National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

New River Gorge
National Park and Preserve

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New River Gorge National Park and Preserve

News Release

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Steep Valley Fire Update

GLEN JEAN, WV - The Steep Valley Fire increased to 1904 acres overnight Thursday into Friday. The rain on Friday morning and early afternoon dampened fire activity. However, it continues to burn in the War Ridge and Backus Mountain areas, a remote part of the park within park boundaries. Containment is now up to 29% as of Friday evening. Smoke may be visible when the fire is actively burning, and it may linger in the gorge for several days as it moves across the landscape. The cause of the fire is under investigation.



“Fire activity was diminished significantly due to precipitation over the area on Friday,” said Steep Valley Fire Incident Commander Trainee Nate Orsburn. “Fire activity continues in steep, rugged, and inaccessible terrain making it difficult for crews to put in direct fire line,” Orsburn continued. Firefighter safety remains a number one priority. To date, there has been one minor injury to a firefighter.

As of Friday, 40 firefighters were actively engaged on the fire focused on maintaining and holding existing fire lines due to rain over the fire area. Today, crews will focus on holding maintaining, and improving fire lines as a warming and drying trend is expected for the area starting this weekend. As fuels dry out, fire activity may steadily reanimate, as well.

The War Ridge Campground is currently the only area in the park that is closed at this time. The access road beyond the campground is closed as well. The remainder of the park is open for normal hours of operation. Should fire activity and conditions change, park management will reassess for any needs to adjust park operations.

Resources from multiple federal and state agencies from across the country have arrived to assist New River Gorge National Park and Preserve personnel. For more information and updates please visit, <https://inciweb.nwcg.gov/incident-information/wvnrp-steep-valley-fire>.

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