



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 1946 acres as of Saturday, November 12th, 2023. Although minimal fire activity was seen Saturday, the increase in acreage is due to updated imaging and mapping. The fire continues to burn in the War Ridge and Backus Mountain areas, a remote part of the park and remains within park boundaries. Containment is now up to 50% as of Saturday 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.

While the rain on Friday diminished fire activity, the fire is not out. The weather outlook shows a drying trend settling into the area starting today which will likely lead to an increase in fire activity. When the fire reanimates, firefighters who are actively engaging in suppression make tactical decisions which may include burning out pockets of fuels to help strengthen existing lines. With any increase in fire activity, smoke will be present within the gorge and will likely linger for a few days. Air quality in the New River Gorge area is currently listed as good and will be monitored in the coming days.



PADCNR / Steve Keiper

As of Saturday, 62 firefighters were actively engaged on the fire. Today, crews will reinforce and maintain fire lines as a warming and drying trend is expected for the area. Firefighter safety remains a number one priority. To date, there has been one minor injury to a firefighter.

The War Ridge Campground and access road are the only closures in the park. 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 along with a private hand crew from Oregon 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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