



## North Zone Complex Daily Update

Saturday March 23, 2024

### Contact Information

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Today, at 7 a.m., the Southern Area Complex Incident Management Gold Team, led by Incident Commander Debbie Beard, joined the Virginia Department of Forestry and the West Virginia Division of Forestry in managing the North Zone Complex. The Gold Team thanks all the firefighters and other resources for their excellent work on managing the multiple wildfires in the area during the last few days. The team also expresses condolences to the families who have lost homes and other structures.

### Fire Update

The North Zone Complex covers six wildfires burning in the George Washington and Jefferson National Forests and on state and private land in West Virginia and Virginia. They are:

- 1. Waterfall Mountain/Shenandoah Forest/211 Fire (5,692 acres)** – Yesterday, firefighters worked on the south and west sides of the fire to tie it in with a previous burn area on the northwest all the way around to Hwy. 211. On the south end of the fire, crews are working behind the homes there. The Virginia Department of Forestry is managing the east side of the fire, north and south of Hwy. 211. Residents in the area of Sundance Retreat, New Market have been asked to evacuate. For more information, visit <https://www.facebook.com/shencosheriff>.
- 2. Waites Run Fire (3,760 acres)** – Firefighters have completed work on the east side of the fire. Today, they will continue to work on structure protection along the southwest side. Crews will scout the northeast and east sides of the fire to explore ways to pull containment lines together.
- 3. Capon/Brush Run Fire (2,559 acres)** – Crews have surrounded the outer perimeter of the fire and are working in areas on the northside where fire has moved beyond the intended control line. Firefighters continue to look for natural barriers to establish a containment box around the fire.
- 4. Edith Gap/Serenity Ridge Fire (829 acres)** – Firefighters are working along the southwest side to tie it in with the road system going west and south into a previous burn area. On the north side, toward Kennedy Peak, firefighters have a plan in place to continue work there. Firefighters were able to protect the Kennedy Peak observation tower.
- 5. Cove Mountain Fire (75 acres)** – This fire is 100% contained. Firefighters continue to patrol and mop up.
- 6. New Start at Runions Creek (9 acres)** – Firefighters will scout the fire today and work to contain it quickly.

Firefighters have tied the **Waites Run** and **Edith Gap/Serenity Ridge Fires** into an existing fuels treatment area that has reduced the risk of fire spread.

The cause of the fires is undetermined but under investigation.

### Weather

Overnight approximately 0.25 - 0.5 inch of rain fell across the region along the I-81 corridor. Another 0.25 inch is possible before the rain event ends around midday. After that, cooler air will bring wind gusts up to 40-45 mph on the ridge tops and 30-35 mph in the valleys late into the evening.

### Fire Behavior

Rain fell on all fires overnight so minimal fire behavior is expected today. The fires east of Hwy. 81 received some rain, although fires west of Hwy. 81 may not have received as much. As a result, when the sun comes out later today and wind gusts pick up, some fire activity could occur on the fires west of I-81.

### Evacuations

Residents in the area of Sundance Retreat, New Market have been asked to evacuate. For more information, visit <https://www.facebook.com/shencosheriff>.



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## Smoke and Air Quality

Air quality is currently good. Additional information is available at [www.airnow.gov](http://www.airnow.gov).

## Safety

We ask that public to avoid areas with active fire for your safety and to allow firefighters to work safely. Public and firefighter safety is always our top priority. In addition, please do not fly drones near or over a wildfire. Drones and firefighting aircraft are a dangerous mix and could lead to accidents or slow down wildfire suppression, including water drops. **If you fly, we can't.**

## Burn Ban

Virginia's 4 p.m. Burning Law remains in effect until April 30, 2024. It bans open-air burning before 4 p.m. if the fire is within 300 feet of the woods or dry grass which could carry fire to the woods. Burning is allowed between 4 p.m. and midnight as long as the burner takes proper precautions and attends the fire at all times. For more information, please visit <https://dof.virginia.gov/wildland-prescribed-fire/fire-laws/4-pm-burning-law>.